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ABSTRACT

A collection of articles on dictionaries for advanced second language learners includes essays on the past, present, and future of learners' dictionaries; alternative dictionaries; dictionary construction; and dictionaries and their users. Titles include: "Idle Thoughts of an Idle Fellow; or Vaticinations on the Learners' Dictionary" (Ladislav Zgusta); "Recent Developments in EFL Dictionaires" (Gabriele Stein); "Learners' Dictionaries--Recent Advances and Developments" (A. P. Cowie); "The Background and Nature of ELT Learners' Dictionaries" (Tom McArthur); "Dictionaries and Language Learning" (Paul Nation); "Monolingual and Bilingual Dictionaries: Fundamental Differences" (Tadeusz Piotrowski); "The Collocational Dictionary and the Advanced Learner" (Morton Benson); "Grammar in Dictionaries" (Thomas Herbst); "The Treatment of Pronunciation in Some Monolingual General Dictionaries Used by Learners of English" (W. R. Lee); "How Many Words Is a Picture Worth? A Review of Illustrations in Dictionaries" (Hilary Nesi); "Uncommonly Common Words" (John M. Sinclair); "A Vocabulary for Writing Dictionaries" (Gwyneth Fox); "Vocabulary, Culture, and the Dictionary" (Hilary Bool, Ronald Carter); "Which Dictionaries and Why? Exploring Some Options" (Makhan L. Tickoo); "How to Use a Dictionary?" (Soekemi); and What We (Don't) Know about the English Language Learner as a Dictionary User: A Critical Select Bibliography" (R. R. K. Hartmann). (MSE)

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LEARNERS' DICTIONARIES: STATE OF THE ART

REGIONAL
LANGUAGE
CENTRE

Edited by
MAKHAN L TICKOO

ANTHOLOGY SERIES 23

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Edited by Makhan L. Tickoo

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FOREWORD

The publication of this special state of the art anthology on Learners' Dictionaries (third in this series) marks the 20th year of RELC. A brief word to justify the Centre's involvement in its design and development appears therefore to be in place.

Part of the reason should be obvious: a reliable dictionary is a resource that every educated person must turn to from time to time. Judges and lawyers do so in courts of law; so may ordinary people playing word games and solving crossword puzzles. Teachers do so more often and language teachers most of all. A good dictionary can be a dependable friend at home, at work and at leisure.

Some other parts may, at first sight, be less obvious but their influence on language and learning appears to be becoming pervasive. Dictionaries, more particularly the dictionaries of English, are multiplying. Sir Randolph Quirk tells us that in 1984 there were some 6700 different English dictionaries in the library of Indiana State University at Terra Haute in the USA. Many new ones come into our markets every year. With growth in numbers has come sophistication in quality. New dictionaries, which need not always be better than the old, often offer more and the best of them also demand a higher degree of what one might call dictionary literacy. Good use depends on greater awareness of what is on offer and a fresh set of skills to take advantage of that.

If what was said above is true,there is a need for better training - of teachers but much more so, of users. Unfortuantely training in the use of dictionaries has not kept pace with recent developments: many students appear to receive insufficient help on how to make the best use of their dictionaries. They therefore fail to exploit all the riches that are hidden in them. As a result the dictionary may have become a poorly used rich resource in most homes and many schools.

And that is why RELC has decided to carry out research into learners' dictionaries and launched the publication of this first volume on the subject. The volume contains sixteen specially written papers by dictionary makers and linguistic scholars of repute from many parts of the world. Its primary focus is the practical aspects of such a dictionary - how to make the product more user-friendly, how to make its strengths or limitations known to teachers and learners and, above all, how to help make its use more educative and productive in language classrooms, if possible all classrooms.

I therefore feel happy in associating myself with this publication and in placing on record my gratitude to all those scholars and practitioners who have so generously responded to the editor's call and worked to make this volume a useful resource for language teachers and users everywhere where languages are taught and learnt. It is my hope that it will prove its worth among language educators as well as lexicographers.

Earnest Lau
Director
March 1989

INTRODUCTION

1. The subject of this anthology is the dictionary for the advanced learner. Such a dictionary, at the present stage in its history, can be said to have three main attributes: it is derivative, it is in most cases monolingual and it is principally a pedagogic resource. Each attribute has to be grasped as each raises issues in lexicography and in language education.

(i) As a derivative dictionary the learners' dictionary(LD) is capable of becoming endowed with all those strengths that dictionary design has gained in lexicography's long voyage through many centuries of human history (See Read 1986 for a brief history of lexicography). At the same time, it must also become an heir to the mother ship's current limitations. To the extent that, for instance, the Oxford English Dictionary (OED) which serves as a model for English dictionaries, is possessed of "the essential ingredients of a satisfactory dictionary" (Burchfield, 1986), its derivatives can safely build on established principles or practice. But to the extent that dictionary making today suggests a lack of "fundamental thinking about the nature of lexicology" or bears witness to "an astonishing conservatism" (Quirk, 1986) either in its design features or in its unchanging tools of evaluation, LDs must show these too. And if in addition dictionary design today still lacks "a foundation of empirical fact about lexicographic practice" (Crystal, 1986), that too must be shared alike by the derivatives and the dictionaries at the source.
Of particular interest in this context is the sudden blossoming of scholarly interest in dictionary making in the 1980s and several significant steps being taken to make the mother ship fit for its voyages across the fast expanding world of organised language teaching. These include the work being done on dictionary bibliographies, the establishment of dictionary research centres, the founding of academic programmes for training lexicographers, encouragement of ideas towards establishing a theory(theories)of lexicography, work on establishing scientific principles for dictionary evaluation and research on dictionary users and uses. New types of dictionaries based on years of team research, including new national dictionaries, eg the Australian National Dictionary (Ramson, 1987) and those that extend the scope of monolingual LDS by making use of powerful computer technologies (Sinclair, 1987), are some other indicators of a renewal of faith in the dictionary as a powerful resource.

(ii) What goals must an LD set itself as a monolingual dictionary? Ilson provides an answer. A monolingual dictionary for the adult learner of English "should model the lexical competence of the adult native speaker." (Ilson,

1985) He finds powerful theoretical support for his view arguing that although the concept may be both abstract and at best only partially understood, "it is doubtful whether we have an equivalent idea of what any other type of dictionary should do." To the extent that Ilson is right in thus setting the goal of "an ideal learners' dictionary", LDs, much like other monolingual dictionaries, will primarily be judged by how near they come to approximating this ideal. In most cases it is indeed the case that LDs today are judged in roughly the same terms as other monolingual dictionaries.
But doubts have of late been raised on both the concept, viz. native-speaker competence (Paikeday, 1985) and on its possible place in language description and foreign language pedagogy (Ferguson, 1982; Kachru, 1986). For English lexicography in particular there are also two contending viewpoints to consider: first, at a time when better dictionaries are products of team effort, there is empirical support for the view that a lexicographer's task "is to set out clearly and concisely the collective lexical competence of the speakers of a language, which will, of course, greatly exceed the competence of any one individual speaker, especially in entries where technical terms and rarely used words are treated." (Robins, 1987) Secondly, with the growing use of highly sophisticated computer technologies and impressive databases of 'real' language, the status and role of native speaker intuition or introspection as lexicographic evidence has come into question (Sinclair, 1985, 1987).

(iii) For an LD of tomorrow there may be reason however to question not just its need to remain primarily monolingual but, in some measure, the very basis of its relationship with the dictionary at the source. In view of the fact that more learners seem to use and feel happy with bilingual dictionaries (Atkins and Knowles, 1988) and perhaps more importantly, that some of the best advances in lexicography of the last fifty years are more a result of pedagogic prescience than pure linguistic insight, it may be part of professional wisdom to work towards a relationship of shared concerns rather than of one sided dependence.

As part of this rethinking there may also be a place for the view that an LD, somewhat unlike a dictionary for the native speaker, is essentially a learning tool. Much like a pedagogic grammar which receives sustenance and support from theoretical advances in language description and yet must continually respond to the changes taking place in the psychology and ecology of language teaching and learning, the pedagogic dictionary is an educational aid, a major learning resource, whose form and function must be determined by its audience. The best judgment on LDs is then that of Dr Johnson given some 250 years ago: "In lexicography, as in other arts, naked science is too delicate for the purposes of life. The value of a work must be estimated by its use: It is not enough that a dictionary delights the critic, unless at the same time it instructs the learner; as it is to little purpose, that an engine amuses the philosopher by the subtility of its mechanism, if it requires so much knowledge in its application, as to be of no advantage to the common workman." (Johnson, 1747)

2. A main motivation for work on this anthology and for a study of the uses to which LDs are put in this part of the world, was the understanding a) that LDs as opposed to dictionaries for the native speaker and general user have to be different in what they seek and how they reach their goals and b) that judgments on such a dictionary have to be made on not one but two separate fronts: its reliability as a repository of the current stage of the language and its potential and performance as an effective resource for language teaching but, more so, for language learning. An LD must above all strive for successful communication with differing learning purposes, different learning styles and immensely varied levels of attainment. So although LDs will always share an essential common ground with dictionaries for the native speaker, they have an additional set of roles and responsiblilities. With that understanding there stood another - that enough is not known about and very little is being done to address this major aspect of LDs. A few of the points that, in my view as an Asian EFL teacher, suggest this failure are:

that several major ideas and innovations in the brief history of LDs have gone unnoticed or received insufficient attention;
that most learners and many teachers are unaware of what sets apart a good LD from other comparable and competing dictionaries;
that while LDs have recently gained much sophistication and strength there is little provision in schooling systems for equipping the language learner for effective use;
that the best of today's dictionaries are not informed by user (system) expectations or the skills that are employed in dictionary use;
that much recent work done on establishing learner profiles, teacher/learner involvement in dictionary use etc has remained confined to Europe or North America where English is learnt for different purposes and under entirely dissimilar conditions. Hardly any major project on English lexicogrpahy is based on a studied understanding of the Asian(or third-world) classrooms. In what follows I shall selectively support a few of these statements from an Asian practitioner's perspective:

(i) Ninety years ago Henry Sweet wrote: "The fact that the languages commonly learnt by Europeans belong mostly to the Aryan stock, and have besides a large vocabulary in common of borrowed Latin, French and Greek words, is apt to blind them to a recognition of the fact that the real intrinsic difficulty of learning a foreign language lies in that of having to master its vocabulary". (Sweet, 1899). Having argued that for speakers of English or modern European languages, mastering the vocabulary of European languages meant learning "to recognise a number of old friends under slight disguises and making a certain effort to learn a residue of irrecognisable words" and that "we can master enough of the grammar of any language for reading purposes within a definite period - generally less than six months - but we cannot do the same with the vocabulary unless it is already partially familiar to us in the way that the vocabulary of Italian is to all English speakers", Sweet made a case for giving priority to vocabulary in foreign language teaching.

As part of this belief in the centrality of word teaching Sweet perhaps for the first time argued for an LD totally different in both its scope and substance. Writing at a time when parts of OED had been published, he wrote "Such a dictionary as the New English Dictionary, which attempts to include the whole of English vocabulary from 1200 to the present day, is not, even from a purely scientific and theoretical point of view, a dictionary, but a series of dictionaries digested under one alphabet. Such dictionaries have no practical interest". He criticised most of the larger dictionaries as being "compromises between an expanded dictionary and an abridged cyclopedia" and called for "dictionaries which are strictly limited to the modern language, and exclude all encyclopediac elements". More important, he was also perhaps the first linguist to define the distinctive features of such a dictionary - its provision for word grammar, its exclusion of "superfluous" and "half superfluous" words, its conciseness, its "fullness of treatment of the commonest words and the relatively small space given to rare words", its use of "plain, simple, unambiguous language" to define words. In a chapter of his book which was among the first full-length works on language teaching, Sweet not only outlined the place of such a dictionary in sound vocabulary teaching but also provided many usable insights to relate LDs and word teaching.

If Sweet's advice on the centrality of vocabulary and the place of LDs inside an integrated plan of language teaching remained a closed book for most language teachers for a good half of this century, so did the distinctive features of the work done by psychologists and applied linguists in the early years of this century. A main movement in English language teaching for about twenty years of the first half of this century focussed word study, vocabulary counts and word teaching. Having begun almost simultaneously in the Orient (West, 1926; Palmer, 1931-), in the United States (Thorndike, 1921) and United Kingdom (Ogden, 1930), it gained momentum in the early 1930s. Apart from the word counts and organised word-study programmes that resulted in the beginners' vocabularies and general service lists some of which are still in use, there was work on LDs of English including the following:

(ii) A L Thorndike spent many years working on what were, for his day, the largest corpora of English words. Having derived the bulk of his data from writings closley associated with teaching and learning, he took help from some 270 assistants to examine and classify them. The main object of his research was to help the teacher of reading and its main outcome included several 'word books' (Fries and Traver, 1965) and a series of three dictionaries at three different grade levels, each of which greatly influenced the classroom vocabularies and LDs produced by Michael West in India and elsewhere and, to a lesser extent, the work done by Harold Palmer and his colleagues in Japan. Specifically prepared for students in elementary and secondary schools, the Thorndike-Century dictionaries aimed at making the dictionary "not merely or chiefly a repository or museum of facts about words, but a specific tool to provide aid to high-school students whenever they need to know the meaning, spelling or pronunciation of a word or phrase" (Thorndike, 1921a; Read, 1973) Very little of the work he did to change the dictionary from "an inert museum to a useful tool", which included the giving of priority to semantic relatedness over part-of-speech identity and focussing the words and meanings of interest to learners at particular grades and levels of attainment, appears to have received the attention it deserved in ES(F)L dictionaries, although some of it forms part of later work in American children's dictionaries (Ilson, 1986). A study of his work may yet pay dividends in both word teaching and in the making and use of LDs.

(iii) Even less seems to be known about the specifics of the research into English words and their teaching-learning on which Harold Palmer spent the best part of his productive life. As A S Hornby wrote in 1937, working in Japan Palmer had hoped for the emergence of a new-type dictionary "as a possible crowning achievement of IRET research activities" (Hornby, 1973). Unfortunately for reasons of time and his dissatisfaction with the prevailing ideas on defining vocabularies (Palmer, 1934, 1936) he was unable to compile such a dictionary leaving it to Hornby to complete it. What he did produce however is little known among ELT practitioners. This includes (a) an essay on lexicology and specimen pages of a New Type Dictionary (Palmer, 1932, 1934); (b) (with others) A Dictionary of Pronunciation with American Variants (Palmer, et al, 1926) within a "vocabulary of plain English" with 95% to 100% of words used in connected speech(With 9645 words in heavy type this dictionary excluded words mainly based on what he called " tone colour" (ie words that "suggest in various ways the mood, attitude, point of view and even the character of the user, or the conditions in which the word is used"[1]; (c) two different French-English and English-French dictionaries (Palmer, 1940, 1941); (d) a number of zoned lists of English words, word combinations and word collocations (Palmer, 1931, 1932) and (e) a dictionary-cum-grammar of words that posed particular problems to foreign learners (Palmer, 1938).

Palmer's synoptic chart of the preposition 'at' (Palmer, 1934), for example, although prepared without help from computer technologies or recent lexicological findings, appears to anticipate some of the work now being done in Birmingham on what Sinclair calls uncommonly common words (See Chapter 11). Much of this work on all aspects of words, on simplification (Palmer, 1934) as on language teaching remains largely unknown to this day.

(iv) Two men who came to word study and language (teaching) simplification with totally opposing viewpoints, produced LDs at about the same time in the 1930s. C K Ogden, who found Thorndike-type frequency study useful only "as a remedy for unemployment in the field of pedagogic 'research'" arguing that "the banality of its products" was "their own sufficient condemnation" (Ogden, 1934), worked to produce a power-packed vocabulary of 850 words "equal to approximately 3,000 words in any previous attempts at simplification and in covering power to 20,000 ordinary words". He used this 850 word vocabulary with only 18 verbs to produce and adapt scores of books and to define some 30,000 words of his dictionary (Ogden, 1932). Working at the same time on word teaching inside a meticulously-planned reading programme, Michael West found Ogden's Basic English totally unusable for teaching purposes. (West, et al, 1934) Building on the findings of frequency studies and his own work on a number of controlled vocabulary Readers, and making use of "a process of addition and deletion", he devised a minimum defining vocabulary (MAV) of 1490 items which were "fully adequate to define or describe 24,000 items" (West, 1933). The MAV served both to teach reading and to define the words of his (with Endicott) New Method Dictionary. West's contributions to word teaching, which formed an integral part of highly successful materials for teaching reading, have once again suffered almost total neglect. His defining vocabulary appears however to have influenced at least one LD in the last decade.

3. Even the brief and selective references made in 2.(i-iv) above to a few landmarks in the making of LDs should bring out the fact that in all these pioneering efforts dictionary making formed an essential part of the learning and teaching of vocabulary inside planned language teaching programmes which in turn were informed by the basic belief that vocabulary is a central concern in foreign language teaching. What they may have failed to show however is that especially in the work done by West and Palmer (Tickoo, 1982, 1988) the main criteria for judging every achievement in lexicology, lexicography or language-teaching materials came from the classroom. The voice of the classroom almost always prevailed in making final judgments on techniques, tools or materials.

Both these essentials were soon lost sight of in what Howatt aptly terms "the world of phonemics and speech sound analyses" (Howatt, 1984) which dominated the applied linguistics of the forties and fifties. A revival of interest in the teaching of vocabulary which began sometime in the early 1970s (Carter, 1987) should go some way in redressing the balance, but there is little to suggest that even today the voice of the schoolroom has begun to inform 'received' wisdom in applied linguistics. LDs can also in some measure suffer from this as much as any other aids to language teaching and learning. Perhaps they already do. A brief and admittedly partial look at the current scene in LDs should show some of it.

(i) LDs have, especially in the last decade, continued to make big strides and a few recent advances in particular suggest a paradigm shift of great potential. New ways of defining (or explaining) words, new approaches to word grammar and more recently to some aspects of word pragmatics, better and more powerful illustrative examples and better uses of drawings and pictures, are a few of the additions that have endowed the LDs of 1980s with measurable strength and sophistication. Better LDs now offer a wide range of information and in each case they seek progressively better means to make their offerings more user-friendly. The LD of today ought therefore to be more dependable both in what it offers and in how it does so. But in spite of such additions and improvements and also, at least arguably, because of some of them, LDs in use have begun to raise major problems which require early attention and satisfactory resolution.

(ii) Each publishing house sells its products using the most powerful media resources but few do anything to educate the consumer. In what looks like a dictionary war of the latter half of the 1980s, the user -teacher or student - knows little about the true nature of the changes that have come into the different competing products. A main result is that the sophistication that LDs have gained is not matched at all by that of their users; if anything the gap between the two is ever widening. A majority of language teachers in schools are unaware of the changes taking place; a majority of textbook writers show this too. A study of two series of English textbooks widely used in schools in one part of this region, for example, showed the following: one offers little by way of guidance on dictionary use; the other has some exercises on dictionary use but most of these offer no help on any of the features that set apart today's LDs.

(iii) But does the tertiary-level student achieve the esential reference skills after he enters the university? To find this out I used entries from two English dictionaries and gave a few dictionary-based tasks to some 60 undergraduates. Most of them were unable to take advantage of the additional features that make the LD a more powerful learning tool. They knew little about its grammar codes and precious little about how to use it as an aid to their own use of words, word-forms and word-meanings. At their best a few of them made use of a tiny fraction of what the LD offered.

Much of this has support in studies done elsewhere. Bejoint (1981) found, for example, that "monolingual dictionaries are not used as fully as they should be: their introductions are not commonly referred to, and neither are the coding systems for syntactic patterns. Certainly many students are not even aware of the riches that their monoligual dictionaries contain." Cowie refers to a lack of understanding among teachers about the "radically different information" now found in LDs (Cowie 1981).

(iv) But how far have the most widely-used LDs become better learning resources? Here too there is uncertainty and doubt. Nesi, for example, looked at three widely used LDs from the point of view of the learner-writer. He came to the conclusion that "all three dictionaries can seriously mislead the student, even in the choice of comparatively common words" (Nesi, 1987). Jain had found out earlier (Jain, 1981) that even better LDs failed the advanced learner in areas of word use where he needed them most. His research showed that LDs set up false equivalences between lexical items and provided little help on the interface between meaning and pragmatics.

(v) A related aspect is that of actual dictionary use among teachers and learners. "An area where little is known and much may be improved" (Atkins and Knowles, ibid) this aspect has, in most of Asia, received little systematic attention. The exceptions (eg Baxter, 1980) are small studies which only underscore the need for longitudinal research to arrive at dependable user profiles at different levels of schooling. What is known is that years of neglect of vocabulary and its teaching and a growing suspicion (often but not always for right reasons) of words in isolation has built up wrong attitudes towards dictionaries. The bilingual dictionary, although in wide use, is very often as suspect as bad comics, but even the monolingual dictionary often fares no better. In Asia, much more than in Europe, the dictionary is "probably the most taken for granted" and underutilized of "our key institutions" (Brumfit, 1985)

4. In preparing a statement entitled 'Learners' Dictionaries: An Asian Perspective' which I sent to more than twenty lexicographers and applied linguists in different centres of learning where work had recently been done on LDs in English, I sketched out the main points of the view expressed above. Enclosed was a list of possible theme areas with tentative titles under each and an invitation to write for RELC publications on an aspect of LDs. Seventeen specially written papers were received. Sixteen of these, covering the four major theme areas, have been included in this anthology; the seventeenth paper is being published as an RELC Occasional Paper (No. 45).

(i) Four papers constitute Part I. Its theme is 'Learners' Dictionaries: Past, Present and Future.' As well as contributing to an understanding of the major milestones in the history of LDs they provide analyses of recent developments together with some innovative ideas on possible future developments in this field. What Ladislav Zgusta calls "an exercise in futuristic lexi-fiction" comes first. In it he explores the rich possibilities in the use of "a (computerised) modular dictionary with variable density of information". In the second paper entitled 'Recent Developments in EFL Dictionaries' Gabriele Stein presents a view of how things began in EFL lexicography followed by a detailed critical examination of some recent developments in ES(F)L dictionary making, using examples and evidence from several widely used LDs. In 'Learners' Dictionaries - Recent Advances and Developments' A P Cowie reviews the main achievements of the last ten years of "remarkable expansion in number and variety of new English learners' dictionaries" focussing those major design features where lexicographers claim to have made major breakthroughs. Finally, in 'The Background and Nature of ELT Learners' Dictionaries' Tom McArthur places the 20th-century EFL dictionaries inside "their pedigree" which "stretches back to the Renaissance" to explore how a few of their main features came into being and the ways in which each of them has contributed to the making of today's LDs.

(ii) Part II comprises some alternatives to LDs. Three of the four papers that make up this part have been included in this anthology. The fourth paper 'The Explanatory Combinatorial Dictionary and Learners' Dictionaries' by Igor A Melčuk, is a separate RELC publication.

In 'Dictionaries and Language Learning' Paul Nation makes a distinction between LDs which "function as sources of useful accessible information about the language" and those which should, in addition, "help learners to learn". Making use of some findings in lexicological and language-teaching research, Nation suggests ways towards making the latter dictionary possible. Tadeusz Piotrowski's paper 'Monolingual and Bilingual Dictionaries: Fundamental Differences' examines some major differences between the two types of dictionaries to justify a changed perspective on the role and place of the latter as a potentially productive resource for the learner's own use of a second/foreign language. In his 'The collocational Dictionary and the Advanced Learner' Morton Benson explains and defends an approach to the making of the collocational dictionary by highlighting its major strengths on a comparative perspective.

(iii) Part III takes the reader inside the LD. The six papers in this part explore the major features of today's LDs with illustrative examples and supportive data from recently completed English language dictionaries. In 'Grammar and Dictionaries' Thomas Herbst makes an in-depth study of the treatment of grammar in LDs to bring out their strengths and limitations. The paper also presents Herbst's ideas on 'a valency dictionary of the future' and 'a marking dictionary for the language teacher'. W R Lee's 'The treatment of Pronunciation in Some Monolingual General Dictionaries Used by Learners of English' examines a number of British dictionaries currently in use to show what is provided on English pronunciation in each. Besides higlighting some main similarities and differences between different LDs, he makes a case for additions and improvements to make them more useful to EF(S)L learners. Hilary Nesi's 'How many Words Is a Picture Worth?' looks at different aspects of dictionary illustrations to bring out the strong and weak points in their differing treatments. The insights provided are meant to help not just lexicographers but also dictionary users. In his paper 'Uncommonly Common Words' John Sinclair refers to a major lacuna in the currently used dictionaries and grammars, viz. their failure to pay adequate attention to the commonest words of English. He then makes use of one of the most frequently used two-letter words -'of' - to demonstrate the immense possibilities that are opened up by data-based evidence on its uses in 'real' English. Gwyneth Fox's 'A Vocabulary for Writing Dictionaries' looks at the language used for defining in LDs. By making a comparative study of the predefined vocabulary of a widely used LD with the "language of everyday life" used for that purpose in another, she draws some useful conclusions about the relative merits of different word lists in lexicography and language teaching. The problems of learning words on the interface of language and culture is the fous of 'Vocabulary, Cutlture and the Dictionary' by Hilary Bool and Ronald Carter. Making use of four actual examples of words where learners need help the authors demonstrate the inadequacies of LDs in the guidance they offer on each.

(iv) Part IV is focussed on the dictionary user. Makhan L Tickoo's 'Which Dictionary and Why: Exploring Some Options' seeks to help the teacher as a selector of LDs to raise the right type of questions towards making a good choice. A few LDs are used to provide a sample of answers that would emerge. Sukeimi's paper 'How to Use a Dictionary?' offers specific guidance to the language learner on those aspects of an LD where help may not always be provided in English language classrooms.

In the final paper of this part and of the anthology - 'What We (Don't) Know About the English Language Learner As a Dictionary User: A Critical Select Bibliography' R R K Hartmann provides insightful reviews of ten select items from recent writings (books and papers) on the subject of LDS which lead him in the final section to ten major generalisations on the present state of the art. Hartmann's concluding paragraph appears also to be the most appropriate note on which to conclude this introduction: "The field of 'pedagogical lexicography' must be developed forcefully in open interaction between language teachers and dictionary makers. However, such developments will not succeed unless they are accompanied by higher standards of professional training and academic research."

Makhan L Tickoo

NOTE

1. Explaining his term 'tone colour words' Palmer wrote: "If we call a cat a cat we are using a word without colour, the word cat suggests a cat and nothing more. If we call a cat a puss, a pussy or a pussy-cat, we are using the child's attitude towards the cat; if we call the cat a domestic feline quadraped, we are using terms that suggest the point of view of a scientist, the humorist or a pedant." He went further to explain and illustrate "the different tinges of tone colour" showing not only what each 'tinge' signified but where each would be appropriately used.

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PART I

LEARNERS' DICTIONARIES: PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE

Idle Thoughts of an Idle Fellow; or,
Vaticinations on the Learners' Dictionary
Ladislav Zgusta

Recent Developments in EFL Dictionaries
Gabriele Stein

Learners' Dictionaries:
Recent Advances and Developments
A P Cowie

The Background and Nature of
ELT Learners' Dictionaries
Tom McArthur

IDLE THOUGHTS OF AN IDLE FELLOW; OR, VATICINATIONS ON THE LEARNER'S DICTIONARY

(āsatyakośyam)

Ladislav Zgusta

The time span between the date I returned from a trip and actually received the invitation to write this paper, and the date the manuscript would have to be sent was just a few weeks; weeks more than full of other obligations, busy with the merry-go-round of the end of the term, and so on. Consequently, the decision had to be faced: either write nothing, or write a text not adorned with footnotes, references, and other paraphernalia of solid scholarship; that is, a paper containing only opinions and ideas, if not perhaps illusions. I decided for the latter possibility: to write a paper containing purely personal impressions (not results of logo artis performed enquiries), my own views, and some vague vaticinations (not well-argued judgements and conclusions based on exhaustive searches in bibliographies). In short, this paper will discuss some possible prognoses concerning the possible and desirable future development of the learner's dictionary; prognoses that in some respects merely anticipate, without developing the technical details.[1] In other words, my intention is to write a futuristic article. And why not? If 'science fiction' is an accepted branch of literature (and Webster's Ninth tells me that the collocation dates from 1851), why should we not indulge in lexi-fiction, particularly for a celebratory purpose like the present one?

So be this an exercise in futuristic lexi-fiction. However, how could a humanistic scholar like myself start talking about the future but by an excursus into the past? Otherwise, an abomination.

It may be a matter of general consensus that the first specimen of a contemporary learner's dictionary was A S Hornby's Advanced Learner's Dictionary, published by Oxford University Press 1948 (lst edition) and that the most important innovation of this dictionary consisted in the systematic and explicit indication of syntactic patterns in which English verbs occur. Considered from a strictly theoretical point of view, this is not a great novelty in lexicographic tradition at least outside the realm of English; after all, since at least the early nineteenth century, any Greek or Latin dictionary (which were the two languages most frequently and intensively taught in European schools at that time, perhaps up to the first World War) indicated the verbs' syntactic patterns. The 'only' difference between the practice of those dictionaries and Hornby (but a capital one) was that both Latin and Greek are inflected languages, so that the most prominent feature of a verb's syntactic pattern is the case it governs, ie, the case in which the verb's object or complement etc must stand: Lat. *bibo, -ere* 'drink' governs the Accusative; *utor, -i* 'use' the Ablative; Gr. *hépomai, -esthai* 'follow' the Dative; etc.

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[1] *Besides the titles quoted in the text, the reader will find rich references in Herbst (to be published) and Zgusta, 1988.*

There is no need to say that the mere indication of the case as it was done in the old dictionaries is not sufficient, if not for another reason than because frequently it is also necessary to know which preposition joins the verb with its complement; but even with this limitation, the indication of the case was quite a powerful descriptive means. The model of these inflected classical languages dominated the treatment of other languages for a long time; it is not so long ago that children were taught in school to call the nominal prepositional phrase with *of* the Genitive, that with *to* the Dative, the direct object and forms like *me*, *him*, *whom* the Accusative. However, this transfer of grammatical terms did not entail the transfer of the lexicographic practice: to my knowledge, even in the heyday of traditional grammar, no English dictionary indicated the verbs' syntactic patterns by the terminology of the inflectional cases. After all it would be awkward to say that, eg *demand* governs Acc + Abl (something from someone); and then, there are more prepositional phrases in English than cases in Latin, so one would have to use the model of then unheard-of-languages that have many cases like Finnish to get all the necessary cases ('to cut with' = Instrumental, but 'to talk with' = Comitative). Thus, it is quite natural that *verb trans*. and *intrans*. were the basic and usually the only descriptors used in English dictionaries.

Modern descriptive grammar, inspired above all by structuralism, not only put an end to transfers of traditional terms such as the designations of cases to formally different if (at least partly) functionally similar forms and patterns, but stressed the necessity of studying syntactic patterns not only as strings of all the objects and complements, with their prepositions, that accompany the verbs, but also with a broader perspective (best represented by Firth's British and Tesnière's French school); namely that of various collocability requirements and restrictions. It was the genius of Hornby that perceived the fruitfulness of all these insights for a practical purpose, namely their usefulness to the learner and the possibility of encapsulating such descriptions of this new type in a dictionary. An increased interest in typical collocations was the logical accompaniment of the indication of the syntactic patterns themselves.

What followed after Hornby's breakthrough was an ever increasing amount of information, both that made available by linguistic research, and that actually put into the learner's dictionary. (The two sets largely overlap but are neither identical nor included one in the other.)

The main areas of increase of information are above all: First, syntactic patterns themselves; their study is strongly fostered by what is called, mostly in France and Germany, the study of valences, and is by now so refined, at least in some spheres of the vocabulary, that it overflows into the realm of the second area of rapid increase of information, namely that of collocability restrictions by semantic classes or by idiosyncrasy of the respective lexical unit. This is naturally connected with the third area, that of set phrases and expressions.

While one can safely expect the amount of information of these types to continue increasing, growth of research has already started in other areas as well. Most of them belong to what is by now usually called pragmatics; this notion is, however, so broad that it will be useful to mention the more important single areas that belong here individually.

The study of discourse and of speech acts has rejuvenated the studies of style and of the various functions of language. Mastery of a (foreign) language is measured not only by the grammaticality of the sentences produced by the learner, but also by their functional appropriateness. This is a vast field of study which extends into the remote spheres of the ethnography of speaking (habits and manners to be observed in discourse and conversation), of the stratification of society as reflected in discourse (eg the degrees of honorific and other styles, so important for many languages of Asia), of the different style-levels normal in various languages (eg the English proclivity to understatement), and into other similar areas.

However, since language is embedded in culture, cultural data are important to the learner not only for steering his linguistic behavior but frequently for choosing the correct lexical equivalent. Such cultural information can be understood in a broad way, so that it can pertain to political and administrative realities of the country or countries whose language is being learned, and so on. Undoubtedly, a good part of this information is of encyclopedic character; be this as it may, it belongs to what the learner has to learn.

Another possible source of encyclopedicity are the technical terms that penetrate into the generally used vocabulary in ever increasing numbers. It is true that special-language dictionaries, not the learner's dictionary are the proper places to handle such nomenclature; but it is, on the other hand, also true that many of such terms are used in general language in a 'debased', ie not strictly technical, less precise or slightly different, meaning, which sometimes requires an encyclopedic gloss, and that many of them are and more of them will have to be included in learner's dictionaries (eg Longman Active Study Dictionary of 1983 has for instance, cholesterol, laser, libido, paternalism).

At the same time, pedagogical practice has shown how important and useful it is to keep making the learner aware of the paradigmatic relations of lexical units; in consequence, it would be useful to indicate synonyms (preferably with meaning discriminations), antonyms, co-hyponyms, etc. This in its turn makes even stronger the requirement of the lexicographic methodology that related lexical units, particularly sets of nomenclature and terms, be treated as groups, as onomasiological pockets in an alphabetically organized dictionary.

As the amount of information put into dictionaries increases, the expectations of the public, ie of the buyers, can be expected to rise as well; and this may be particularly true in respect to learner's dictionaries: the buyer of a learner's dictionary (or the teacher advising him) will expect it to be as refined as the modern methodology of a linguistic laboratory is. So on the one hand, there is development which leads to constant increases in the amount of information of various types, and to a constant refinement of the way in which it is presented.

On the other hand, various buyers or users of dictionaries have various specific needs. Even if we restrict ourselves to learners, we see that there are many recognizable groups of users that can be identified and correlated to what they need; for instance, there is a clear covariation of age groups and ways of explanation of the entry-words' meaning to be used in different types of dictionaries. Other groups of learners are those whose endeavour to master a language is targeted to a limited goal; eg the ability to read and understand scientific prose; or the ability to discuss scientific topics. Other groups of learners are defined by the type of their previous education. However, even with all these and similar more or less clearly indicated groups, still the majority of learners probably is a large, somewhat amorphous population, whose members usually range from late-adolescent to early middle-age, usually with some education either already acquired or in the process of being acquired, normally from high school (in American terminology), or college, or some professional school.

Therefore, we are caught in the following impasse. Each successful or attempted improvement of the learner's dictionary will probably be accompanied by an increase of information offered by the dictionary. However, adding all the information available would make the dictionary too large; therefore, either methods of selective reduction must be found, which is not easy and requires enquiries of its own, or the information must be given in a form so succinct that it may become difficult to grasp. (Usually, the lexicographer proceeds by a combination of both methods.)

Naturally, there are ways to cope with this impasse. One of them is the prolific production of highly specialized dictionaries, a task made so easy by the computer. This specialization of dictionaries covaries with, or is governed by the specific needs of, the various groups mentioned above. Another type of specialization has its *fundamentum divisionis* in the categories of linguistic (and other) phenomena themselves: there are dictionaries of 'grammatical' (morphological, syntactic) difficulties, of collocations, of idioms, etc. However, the specialization cannot be a panacea: there is a limited number of dictionaries the 'normal' user, or learner, is willing to buy. And apart from that consideration, it can be said that if the learner were supposed to buy a series of specialized dictionaries, the effect on the total outlay of money and on the unwieldiness of the series of books would not be smaller than that of one large but comprehensive book.

The other way to cope with the impasse described consists in empirical studies of what the users of dictionaries really seek, how they understand what they are told, etc. Such empirical studies proliferate in recent times; they have brought and undoubtedly will keep bringing much improvement in the format of dictionaries in all its aspects. The reduction of the bulk of the dictionary is (or should or will be), then, a selective process based on what the empirical studies have established as the type(s) of information most sought in dictionaries and as the most efficient ways of presenting it.

However, efficient and useful as all these methods of improvement and all the research connected with them are, they can hardly cope with all the idiosyncratic preferences of the single users (or learners). Teaching a language is not my field, so my experience with learners is severely limited; however, in spite of this limitation, I have known students who prefer the formulaic representations of syntactic patterns as in Longman, but also other students who prefer discursive explanations; I have known students who like informal definitions of the COBUILD type, but also such that felt repulsed, disgusted, and confused by them; the exemplification could continue.

Also, learners use the dictionary both for understanding a text in the foreign language and for producing one; while they usually would be unwilling to buy two dictionaries for these purposes; they need different information for them: and again, the user's expectations are not fully predictable on the basis of his task, because of his idiosyncratic preferences. For instance, I have known students who found typical collocations more useful for the understanding of a foreign text but abstract syntactic patterns for its production, but such were not lacking who preferred collocations for both tasks.

As far as the hard-core learning, or memorizing goes, there again one can observe the differences of the students: some seem to have a more abstract memory, so they remember best the formulaic patterns, which they then enrich by collocations; on the other hand, some begin with a verb's typical collocation or collocations, of which the pattern then is the more abstract representation, but some never seem really to understand the formulae.

All this variation can be described with a much greater degree of finesse: there are, eg students who prefer Longman's style of formulae to that of Hornby, and vice versa; no need, however, to belabor the point.

Naturally, one can imagine, particularly in a futuristic article, that the specialization of dictionaries mentioned above will continue. Even today, one can buy

Benson-Benson-Ilson if one wishes to concentrate on collocations; one buys Cowie's dictionaries for the study of phrasal verbs; one does not have to buy COBUILD if one prefers formal definitions to the COBUILD style; one buys, say, Webster's Ninth if one has to cope with hard words; etc. Consequently, one can imagine that at some point of time in the future, the user, or the learner, will have the possibility to buy according to his preference and choice, eg a dictionary easy on patterns, rich in typical collocations, not burdened by idioms, with only approximative but easy definitions, and with numerous pictorial illustrations particularly in the field of, say, architecture. (Such specializations are already coming into existence: J Kubczak, Mitteilungen des instituts für deutsche Sprache 7, 1980, 18-26 reports about a project of a German learner's dictionary for foreign university students: no 'easy' words, full valences of verbs, 'hard' words from student life and scientific discourse.)

However, possible as such specialization into many various types will soon be, it does not give a solution to the impasse: First, because the learner must himself use the dictionary for some considerable time before he can find out what suits him best, and nobody can give him really specific, precise advice in different situations: he may need only the barest outline of information in many situations but then need may and does arise of a more detailed treatment of a problem. (The variety of the possible tasks has already been mentioned above.)

We have seen above that a series, or group of books is not a good answer to these variegated needs; nor is a single printed book, simply because of its physical limitations: the print cannot be smaller beyond the point of readability, the paper cannot be thinner beyond the point of usability and durability. Therefore, a printed, traditional book's bulk necessarily grows with additional information. Also, in spite of rigid distribution of different types of information into different slots of the entry, the longer the entry, the more difficult to grasp it as a whole or to select, or abstract, out of it what is concretely needed in the given situation. The more comprehensive the formulae and concise the symbols (in order to save space), the more difficult to understand and remember them.

The finesse of linguistic description already is such that eg English phrasal verbs need special dictionaries of their own, specifically prepared for the learner. The valences of a few hundred German verbs make a dictionary of their own. With continued linguistic research, the amount of information of all types will keep increasing; at the same time, the learner will need a comprehensive digest of all that information, because one can confidently expect that the ratio of the learner's time spent in a laboratory in the company of a machine to the time spent in class with a teacher will not change in favor of the latter. The day when I had the attention and help of a Miss Trembath, or Mme Orlez, or Gosp. Kopylov (and God bless their patient souls!) exclusively for myself (several times a week) is gone, for the majority of the learners: they will more and more have to ask the machine, not the teacher.

(A remark is necessary, at this juncture: this whole discussion is not focussed on children, particularly not the more priviledged ones; nor on learners who wish to acquire only some minimal proficiency or can be expected to learn languages by exposure to native speakers either at home or abroad; nor is it concerned with the fragmentary type of learning a language by milling around abroad in the backpackers' way; nor does it take into consideration the reasonable assumption that the 'machine translation' of simple scientific and technical texts written in standardized style, using defined terminology, and avoiding metaphoricity of any sort will be possible, for the more important languages, in the not too distant future.)

The answer to these multifarious needs I would seek in what I would call a 'modular dictionary with variable density of information', stored in and activated by a computer. 'Modular' because I envisage the different types of grammatical, pragmatic, cultural, and encyclopedic information to form coherent blocks; some overlapping would be necessary (eg no presentation of grammatical, or syntactic, patterns, even the most general one, can be completely free of a sprinkling of collocational examples), but basically the organization would be such that the learner could concentrate on grammar, or on idiomatics, or on some strange collocation in a text he reads, on synonyms, on an onomasiological group, or on any pragmatic or encyclopedic type of information. This is not much different from the situation in a printed book, where, as we said, the types of information usually are rigidly distributed into always the same slots in the same sequence; the difference, however, consists in the circumstance that the different length of entries in a printed book causes that the same functional slot is situated in different positions on the page, so to locate a slot, the eye must at least cursorily run through the entry, whereas in a computer program the same command will call up the same functional slot immediately.

More important however, is the other qualification of the dictionary that we have in mind, namely 'with variable density of information'. The idea is that the learner could start with elementary information, say with the most general formulation of a pattern, most typical collocations, etc, and could proceed hence toward more specific, refined, detailed information; or he could start midway and not go any further, in his search; or he could immediately go to rarely occurring idioms, if he hits some strange passage; or call up some general encyclopedic information about a term, or on the contrary, a more technical one.

Much research (irrespective of whether such a 'modular dictionary' is constructed or not) will have to be invested into finding out what difference obtains between the type of information and the format of its presentation that is particularly useful in translating foreign texts and in producing them. Some things have been known since times immemorial: for instance that the latter situation requires information about typical collocations, the former also some information about collocational and other rarities and even nonces, occurring in important texts. However, infinitely much more will have to be found out. The degrees of increasing density of information will have to be established with greater clarity than that reached in our days; perferably, the degrees should be numerous and the gradual difference between pairs of sequentially adjacent degrees small. There also should be the possibility of creating subsets of information included in different blocks and conflating them into a set overlapping into two or several blocks; say, eg a set of collocations that show a syntactic feature and are pragmatically (ie culturally or stylistically, etc) marked. The repertory of such sets should not be fixed, but the learner should have the possibility of creating them in a tentative way by attempting to combine subsets from different blocks; it goes without saying that he would occasionally if not frequently create an empty set: as long as the emptiness of the set reflects the situation in the language and not a lacuna in the data or the program, no harm in that, on the contrary.

Indeed, this putative flexibility of the programme (accompanied, of course, by an appropriate marking of data in the database) in the creation of such new sets can be seen as the learner's opportunity to ask questions answers to which must draw on information in different blocks. It is this flexibility that would give such a computerized modular dictionary as envisaged here the definite advantage over the printed book, because of the speed with which such subsets can be collected and conflated into the required set. The other important advantage would be the following: the variable density of information would allow the learner to use the same modular dictionary from an elementary stage of his knowledge of to a high degree of proficiency in the foreign language; so that he would become thoroughly familiar with the whole program and could exploit everything it offers, whereas few learners (at least to my knowledge) use, say, Longman long enough really to appreciate and make full use of what Procter's patterns offer.

On the whole one would think that the computational part of the task in the construction of such a dictionary is easier to cope with than the linguistic one. As far as hardware is concerned, today's computers would, I think, allow the construction of a program such as discussed here; in a futuristic context, one would, however, like the learner to have the whole program in a portable apparatus, so that he could learn anywhere, not only where a language laboratory or a telephone outlet connected with it allows. This should be no particular difficulty, seeing the rapid progress the whole field has been making: both a storage of more information in a smaller space than today and cordless communication with the database are easily imaginable, and other possibilities may develop. Again, the development of already existing computerized dictionaries, primitive and limited as they yet are, has been so rapid, and such dictionaries, whether orthographic, or synonymic, or bilingual, are so efficient when built as part (integral or optional) of various text-processing machines (word processors, typewriters) or when used as separate apparatus, that it bodes well for further development of computerized dictionaries of a much more sophisticated character. That future users will know 'how to push the buttons' so to say a teneris unguibus goes without saying.

The linguistic, or partly pedagogical partly lexicographic task would seem to be more difficult, both because of the sheer mass of data to be handled and because of the at least partial absence of a unified notional framework in which to handle it. But again, the progress made since the second World War has been so remarkable that it permits the assumption that a project, or idea of something like the 'modular dictionary with variable density of information' while being futuristic is not impossible.

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Zgusta, L with the assistance of D M T CR Farina. 1988. Lexicography Today; an annotated bibliography of the theory of lexicography (Kauśyasāgaram). (Lexicographica, Series major, vol. 18), Tübingen: Max Niemeyer 1988. (The 'Topical Index' lists 85 titles under the heading 'Learner's Dictionary', 9 titles under 'Learner's Use of Dictionaries', and 6 titles under 'Learners' Attitudes and Preferences'; there are 31 titles under 'Users' Attitudes', 27 titles under 'Uses of Dictionaries', and 8 titles on the empirical tests connected with them.)

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN EFL DICTIONARIES

Gabriele Stein

Monolingual dictionaries of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) are used by millions of students and teachers all over the world - but possibly only a few of them will know where the modern history of monolingual EFL lexicography begins.

In the 1930's Harold E Palmer and A S Hornby were both teaching English in Japan.[1] What was not yet available then as a teaching tool was a good dictionary for Japanese students of English. According to Kunio Naganuma

> Dr Palmer and Mr Naoe Naganuma of the Kaitakusha Company made plans to publish a dictionary entitled the **Idiomatic and Syntactic English Dictionary (ISED)** especially for Japanese students of English. Features of the dictionary were to include a clear distinction between countable and uncountable nouns (to be shown by [C]; [U]), the presentation of as many collocations as possible and the introduction of Construction Patterns in a manner clear and easy to comprehend. Examples illustrating all of these features were to be supplied in ample number.
>
> In the year 1936, while the compilation of this dictionary was still in progress, Dr Palmer returned to England. The work which remained to be done was taken over by Mr Hornby who had been brought to Tokyo from Oita at the instigation of Dr Palmer in 1932 ...[2]

The work was completed six years later and appeared in 1942, when Kaitakusha Company published it under the title **Idiomatic and Syntactic English Dictionary.**[3] Due to the successful cooperation between the Japanese publisher and the English publishing house Oxford University Press the dictionary was reprinted in 1948 and retitled in 1952 **The Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English.** Under its changed title it was to conquer the globe. A second edition appeared in 1963,[4] and a third in 1974.[5] For thirty years the '**ALD**' or 'the Horny Dictionary', as it was informally referred to, was the constant companion of millions of foreign learners of English. Then the scene changed. With the publication of the **Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English (LDOCE)** a serious competitor appeared.[6] The Longman dictionary had not only many features of the **ALD** but new ones in addition and thus meant a serious challenge. The new impressions of the **ALD** had to incorporate changes. But the tremendous success of **LDOCE** brought another rival on the scene. In 1980, a third English publisher entered the EFL field: Chambers with their **Universal Learners' Dictionary (CULD).**[7] Meanwhile Collins were making preparations to join the EFL dictionary market. Their **COBUILD English Language Dictionary** appeared in 1987,[8] the very year in which Longman brought out a thoroughly revised edition of the **Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English.**[9] In a short span of time, the EFL dictionary market has become highly competitive. Good competition sparks off new ideas and ventures which were overdue in lexicography, a field that seemed to have been caught in its own tradition and doomed to stagnate. Besides these **mainstream** EFL dictionaries we now have three more specialized EFL dictionaries. These are in the order of their publication: the **Oxford Dictionary of Current Idiomatic English**, compiled by A P Cowie, R Mackin and I R McCaig.[10] The first volume that deals with verb plus preposition/adverb combinations appeared in 1975, that is at a time when the **ALD** was still the only mainstream EFL dictionary on the market. It is worth noting that one of the compilers, A P Cowie, had closely collaborated with A S Hornby on the **ALD**. When the second volume appeared in 1983, **LDOCE** had already made its impact, and T McArthur had used the Longman material in his **Longman LEXICON of Contemporary English** in which the lexical items listed are presented in a topical arrangement.[11] This thesaurus-style EFL dictionary was described as a 'new vocabulary source book'. The third more specialized newcomer is a collocational dictionary, M Benson, E Benson and R Ilson's **The BBI Combinatory Dictionary of English. A guide to Word Combinations.**[12] With John Benjamins Publishing Company another publishing house had entered the EFL dictionary market. The healthy competition and rivalry between major EFL dictionary publishers has made them turn their attention to the dictionary users and their needs. If dictionary users were able to articulate their linguistic reference needs, they could influence EFL dictionary-writing to a hitherto unprecedented degree. Yet EFL dictionary users are not always aware of the differences between a monolingual English general-purpose dictionary (written for native speakers) and a monolingual English dictionary compiled for foreign learners. It may therefore be opportune to outline the basic differences between these two types of dictionary.[13]

1. The word list recorded in an EFL dictionary for advanced learners concentrates on the basic word stock and has a well-balanced inclusion of neologisms, regionalisms and more specialized technical terms. The coverage is usually around 50,000 items. A general-purpose dictionary, on the other hand, has a much higher percentage of archaisms, neologisms, regionalisms, borrowings, and 'technicalisms' which do not belong to the general active vocabulary stock of the native speaker. Desk-size dictionaries list some 70,000 items or more.

2. The beginnings of the monolingual English dictionary for native speakers reach as far back as the seventeenth century. The aim of these early reference books was to explain to the layman in plain English the difficult or 'hard' words which had been borrowed from Greek and Latin. Monolingual English lexicography with its hard word tradition was thus from its inception oriented towards the decoding reference needs of the dictionary users. One noteworthy exception was Henry Cockeram's **English Dictionarie** of 1623 which is divided into three books. The second book lists common English words and translates them into hard words so that anyone who wanted to make his speech more high-sounding and elegant could find the 'appropriate' hard words.[14] With modern English users of general-purpose dictionaries the decoding reference needs are also predominant as research by R Quirk[15] and S Greenbaum **et al.**[16] has shown. The dictiȯnary is consulted to find out the meaning of words. According to the same studies the second most frequent reason for looking up a word in a dictionary is spelling. This is a familiar situation for all of us. We want to write a letter, a paper, etc and are not quite sure how a word is spelled. In such situations general-purpose dictionaries are also used for encoding purposes. They thus include lexicographical information to meet the decoding and encoding reference needs of the users, but the decoding aspect predominates.

The information provided in EFL dictionaries also caters for both needs of the users. The encoding needs, however, are given particular attention and emphasis to enable users to produce correct and stylistically adequate utterances. The production of well-formed sentences presupposes a good command of the grammar of a language . The description of the grammatical behaviour of words is therefore the most striking and characteristic feature of EFL dictionaries.

3. Since foreign users are still learners the language used in the definition of words is kept relatively simple in EFL dictionaries.

4. EFL dictionaries and general-purpose dictionaries may also differ with respect to the indication of pronunciation. In general-purpose dictionaries pronunciation is either indicated by a respelling system or by symbols of the international phonetic alphabet. EFL dictionaries use the latter only.

5. In order to help foreign learners to strike the right stylistic level EFL dictionaries contain more explicit references to language use. This is done by means of usage labels and/or usage notes.

6. As a further help for the foreign learners EFL dictionaries provide a considerable number of example phrases and/or sentences which show the item under consideration in actual use.

7. And finally, EFL dictionaries so far do not include etymologies.[17]

After this very general and basic characterization of EFL dictionaries I shall now discuss the variation that we find within the group of EFL dictionaries for advanced learners, restricting myself to the monolingual mainstream EFL dictionaries mentioned so far: the **ALD**, **LDOCE**, **CULD** and **COBUILD**. It goes without saying that an assessment of these four works cannot be exhaustive in one article and therefore is bound to be selective. In my comparative treatment I shall concentrate on three types of issue:

1. features which seem to indicate a certain development within EFL lexicography;
2. features which occur in one particular work and which are so interesting lexicographically that they should be incorporated in other dictionaries;
3. areas where present-day practice varies and where more research is needed to achieve a satisfactory solution.

The comparison will be based on (a) the introductions or guides to the dictionaries, and (b) the dictionaries themselves.

The spread of English as a world language has made EFL dictionaries a very competitive and profitable market. Dictionary users are therefore well advised to study both components, (a) and (b), with great care. Introductions or guides (as well as the text on dust jackets) serve two purposes: they are advertisements for the dictionary and thus often contain claims to outdo their competitors. Yet they also provide indispensable information on the content and structure of the dictionary. The amount of information that introductions give on the work of the lexicographical team as well as its descriptive accuracy and explicitness are often indicative of the team's lexicographical expertise and the attitude towards the envisaged users. Some dictionaries leave their users in the dark on many policy points, others are so explicit that their introduction is a lesson in practical lexicography.

As non-native learners of English we expect EFL dictionaries to describe the standard language - that form of the language that is of most utility to us. It will be understood by most of the native speakers and it is the form of the language that most facilitates international communication between non-natives. Let us therefore check what our four EFL dictionaries say with respect to the social and regional form of English they are describing. Is the actual form specified? Is it British English or American English or both forms? What is the model for the pronunciation recorded?

The **ALD** (3rd edition, seventeenth impression, 1983) clearly specifies the model:

> This is a Dictionary of the English Language as it is written and spoken today by educated British men and women. It lists words, compound words and idiomatic expressions that the learner is likely to come across in everyday

> English speech, in official and informal writing, and in the literature of the 20th and 19th centuries ...
> All special American English spellings and pronunciations are given (...)
> (p. xiii)

As to the model of pronunciation we read:

> The British English form is that which has been called **Received Pronunciation** or **General British**. The forms recommended correspond to those given in the **English Pronouncing Dictionary** (Dent), but the pronunciation shown may not always be that which appears first in **EPD**. Where there is a choice between several acceptable forms, that form is selected which is likely to be easiest for learners. The American pronunciation given is that which is widely acceptable in the United States and has been called **General American** (...)
> (p. xxi)

Chambers' **Universal Learners' Dictionary** is far less explicit. We are told that "the variety of English pronunciation that has been used as a model ... is that which is commonly known as Received Pronunciation or RP." We are also informed that there are many differences between RP and "the particular variety of American English pronunciation" recorded but this "particular variety" of American English is not in fact specified.

Now, some may argue that it does not really matter whether a dictionary specifies the language form that it takes as its basis. It can surely be taken for granted that it is the standard variety! Others may agree that it does indeed matter because the standard form chosen serves as the basis for the indication of the various stylistic levels. Degrees of formality and informality refer to this neutral form of the standard. Chambers differs strikingly from the other EFL dictionaries in its stylistic assignments but we cannot assess the latter properly because the standard variety they relate to is not indicated.

The **Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English (LDOCE$_2$)** characterizes the English it describes as "the core vocabulary of contemporary international English, covering both the major varieties, American and British English (...)" (p. F8). As to pronunciation the accent recorded for British English is RP. Longman is the only EFL dictionary that discloses its pronunciation model for American English:

> The American pronunciations represent one (sometimes two) of the more common accents used by American speakers, and are based on the pronunciation in Webster's **Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary** (1983) (...) (p. F51)

The latest arrival on the EFL scene, **COBUILD**, focusses on the "ordinary, everyday English, that any educated person might read or hear" (p. xix) and above all the international use of such English:

> But this dictionary, originating in Britain, inevitably tends towards a British variety of English. It tries to avoid usages which are not international. Equally, aspects of American, Canadian or Australian English which are distinctive to these regions have been left out, but those which are familiar to the international community have been recorded (...) (p. xx)

The British accent recorded is also RP, but nothing is said about the model for their American English pronunciation.

The question of which social and regional form of the language is taken as the descriptive model is obviously closely linked to the language data used by the different lexicographical teams. Both Longman and **COBUILD**, emphasize in the introduction that they have drawn their material from up-to-date computerized data banks. Longman informs us that

> the Longman Citation Corpus, consisting originally of around 25 million words of text ... has been expanded and updated by adding further two million words of randomly gathered computerized text from current British and American newspapers, and another half a million words of citations covering 15,000 neologisms (...) (p. F8)

And in the **COBUILD** we read:

> The dictionary team has had daily access to about twenty million words, with many more in specialized stores (...).

The resemblance between the two does not only concern the computerized text corpora as such but also the use that is made of them. The whole concept of **COBUILD's** approach to the lexicographical description of English is based on occurrence and frequency of occurrence in the corpus. Word selection and sense arrangement were determined by frequency, examples by occurrence in the corpus.

How many lexical items are listed in the four dictionaries? **ALD's** dust jacket tells us that the "dictionary covers over 60,000 vocabulary items" being made up of "50,000 headwords and derivatives" and "11,000 idiomatic expressions". **CULD** does not give entry figures but only highlights the number of examples included "54,000 examples of modern English usage". Between the two editions of **LDOCE** the total number of entries has not changed much. Whereas the first edition listed "over 55,000 entries", **LDOCE**$_2$ describes its coverage as "56,000

WORDS AND PHRASES - full coverage of American and British English with special emphasis on new words". **COBUILD**, which in its physical format differs from the other three dictionaries, specifies its coverage as "over 70,000 references".

In which order are these lexical items arranged? The overriding principle of arrangement in all four dictionaries is alphabetical and this order is observed for all main entries. Yet dictionary entries may have a more complex structure. They may in addition include **subentries** and/or **run-on entries**. A subentry is an entry with its own boldface headword that is listed slightly indented in a new line after the explanation of the main entry as in the following example from **CULD**:

> **bake** [beik] **1** vti to cook in an oven using either no liquid or fat, or only a very little of these, in the cooking process ...
> **'baker** nc 1 a person who bakes ...

A run-on entry is a headword entry which is literally run onto the text of the main entry as in the following example from the **ALD**:

> **fab.ri.cate** /ˈfæbrɪkeɪt/ vt [VP6A] construct; put together; make up (sth false); forge (a document): ~ an accusation/a will: a ~d account of adventures. **fab.ri.ca.tion**/ˌfæbrɪˈkeɪʃn/ n [U] fabricating ...

Both types of subordinate or secondary entries are used for items that are formally or semantically related to the main headword and each dictionary has its own policy as to what it lists as main entries, subentries or run-on entries.

For three types of lexical units EFL lexicographers, like lexicographers for general-purpose dictionaries, seem to have difficulties as to where to place them within their dictionaries. These are verb+particle combinations (that is verbs followed by a preposition or adverb or both), idioms and affixes. Let us first look at the treatment of verb+particle combinations. The practice in the **ALD** is very complicated:

> English contains many phrases made up of verb and an adverbial particle, for example **go back, run away, take sth down,** or of a verb and a preposition, for example, **go through sth., run into sb., take after sb**. Many of these phrases are idiomatic, and are printed and listed in the same way as other idioms.
> In the entries for the very common verbs like **go, make, put, take,** these verbal phrases are all gathered together in alphabetical order at the end of the verb's entry. (p. xvi)

The foreign learners are thus expected to know whether or not a verb is very common in order to find its particle combination. The policy is not only opaque for the users but also lacks theoretical lexicographical foundation.

A theoretically more satisfactory solution was the practice which Longman adopted in the first edition of **LDOCE**. The dictionary has only main and run-on entries. Verb + particle combinations are all treated as main entries. This means, of course, that they are often separated from each other. But since many verb + particle combinations are lexicalized, their listing as main entries follows common lexicographical practice and their separation from the basic simple verb is linguistically justified.

Chambers Universal Learners' Dictionary, which was the third EFL dictionary in chronological order, adopted a general subentry policy for verb + particle combinations. **CULD** has a very strong subentry component in the dictionary because it tries to list together items that belong to the same word family. Within such a subentry section verb + particle combinations are not listed one after the other because alphabetical order is observed. Thus **break away** and **break down** are separated by **break camp** and **break cover**.

The subentry policy seems to have appealed to Longman because it was adopted in a different form in the two EFL dictionaries for advanced learners published after 1980: the **Active Study Dictionary**[18] and **LDOCE$_2$**. In **LDOCE$_2$** phrasal verbs are separately listed as subentries after the main verb. This policy of arrangement is regarded as so basic that it has also been adopted for phrasal verbs where there is no simple verb form. A simple verb form is listed as a headword (obviously with no definition) and then immediately followed by a subentry, as in the following example:

knuckle^{2} v
knuckle down phr v [I (to)] to start working hard: You'll really have to knuckle down if you want to pass the exam. / We knuckled down to the job / to finding the answer.
knuckle under phr v [I (to)] to be forced to accept the orders of someone more powerful (...)

In **COBUILD** phrasal verbs are also assembled as subentries under the main verb. Yet whereas **LDOCE$_2$** separates the simple verb and its conversion noun, **COBUILD** lists the latter before it gives the phrasal verbs. In assembling all verb + particle combinations after the simple verb, EFL lexicographers seem to put the foreign users' language needs first. Foreign users are still learners. They do not know whether or not a verb + particle combination is lexicalized. Much of their foreign language knowledge is still in a state of half-knowledge. Verb + particle combinations are notoriously difficult not only because of their idiomatic meanings but also because there seem to be so many particles. The part that usually sticks in the students' memory and to which they cling is the basic verb. They will therefore first look up the simple verb when they are trying to recall a particular verb+particle combination. They can thus quickly peruse all the combinations to find the appropriate one and the subentry presentation makes the finding easy.

As to the listing of idioms, practice also varies. Where would we find such an idiomatic phrase as **to hit the nail on the head** in the four dictionaries under review?

The **ALD** describes its policy as follows:

> An idiom (also called an idiomatic expression) is a phrase or sentence of two or more words that has a special meaning of its own. Idioms are printed in **bold italic** type, and are listed alphabetically at the end of an entry, but before both compounds and derivatives. In the longer entries, they are placed at the end of the numbered sections to whose meanings they are most closely related. To find an idiom, look for it in the entry for the most important word in the phrase or sentence (usually a noun, verb or adjective). For example, **pick holes in** is found in the entry for **hole**; **get hold of the wrong end of the stick** is found in the entry for **stick** ... (p. xvi)

Let us apply this policy to the example **to hit the nail on the head**. Which is the most important word in the expression? **Hit** or **nail** or **head**? Foreign Users who do not understand the idiom have no criterion to decide which of the three items **hit**, **nail** or **head** is the most important one. Nor might native speakers. The dictionary users are thus left at a loss. If they look up the item **hit** they are given the following information:

> **hit** /hɪt/ vt, vi (-tt-; pt, pp hit) **1** (VP6A, 15A, 12C) give a blow or stroke to; ... **hit the nail on the head**, guess right; say or do exactly the right thing.

Other users might have looked up the item **nail** where they would have found:

> **nail** /neɪl/ n **1** layer of hard substance over the outer tip of a finger ... **2** piece of metal, pointed at one end and with a head at the other, (to be) hammered into articles to hold them together, or into a wall, etc to hang sth. on .. **hit the ~ on the head**, pick out the real point at issue; give the true explanation ...

The most disappointed users would have been the ones that would have consulted the entry **head** because there is no reference at all. Whether this suggests that **ALD** regards **to hit** and **nail** as important words of the idiom and **head** as unimportant is an open question. The fact that the definitions given under **to hit** 'guess right; say or do exactly the right thing' and **nail** 'pick out the real point at issue; give the true explanation' differ does not only show lexicographical inconsistency. It may also indicate that the compilers themselves lacked criteria to select the 'most important' word and opted for **to hit** as well as for **nail**.

What is the policy in **Chambers Universal Learners' Dictionary**? We read in the **Preface**:

> Phrases are not always listed under the first word of the phrase, eg **pay through the nose** appears under **nose**. If the phrase is not listed under the first word of the phrase you should try looking up the other words in the phrase. Often a phrase is listed under the word which is considered to be the most important word in the phrase. There will often be a cross-reference, eg at **pay** you will find **pay through the nose** see **nose** (p. vii).

CULD seems to have a more complex policy. One is that phrases are listed 'under the first word of the phrase'. Another is the listing under the headword which 'is considered to be the most important word in the phrase'. Both are supplemented by a cross-reference system. Unfortunately, however, the whole policy is made vague by the adverbs 'not always' and 'often'. Users do not know when the one or the other policy is used. **CULD** treats the idiom **to hit the nail on the head** as follows:

> **hit** [hit] - prp **'hitting:** pt, ptp **hit - 1** vti to (cause or allow to) come into hard contact with (someone or something) ...
> **hit the nail on the head** see **nail**.
> ...
> **nail** [neil] nc **1** (often in cmpds) a piece of horn-like substance which grows over the ends of the fingers and toes to protect them ... **2** a thin pointed piece of metal used to fasten pieces of wood etc together ...
> **hit the nail on the head** to be absolutely accurate (in one's description of something or someone, in an estimate of something etc) ...
> **head** [hed] - the idiom is not mentioned.

If we apply **CULD's** explanation we would have to conclude that the first item of the phrase, the verb **hit**, was not selected. Since it was not selected users are cross-referred to **nail** which was considered the most important word of the phrase. There is no cross-reference under the item **head** although we would have expected one in a lexicographically consistent work.

COBUILD does not tell the user under which headword idioms are listed where they consist of several open-class lexical items. All the user is told is that phrases or expressions

> are usually placed at the end of a paragraph or sub-paragraph, if they are very close in meaning to the meaning explained in that paragraph ...
> If a phrase or expression is very frequently used, or is not very close in meaning to any other uses, it may be explained in a separate paragraph ... (p. x)

How is the idiom **to hit the nail on the head** dealt with in **COBUILD**? It is mentioned as follows under the headwords **hit** and **nail**:

hit ...	
10.5 If you say that someone has **hit the nail on the head**, you mean that what they have said is exactly right. (...)	PHR:VB INFLECTS
nail ... . If you say that someone has **hit the nail on the head**, you mean that what they have just said was exactly right and exactly relevant.	PHR:VB INFLECTS ⇑be accurate
EG He had hit the nail on the head mentioning the dump at breakfast. (...)	

Again, there is no entry under **head**. The fact that the explanations given under **hit** and under **nail** differ, that there is in addition an example under the entry **nail** and an indication of a superordinate term (⇑be accurate) in the margin are clear evidence that the treatment of idioms has not received enough attention.

There is an interesting change in the treatment of idioms between **LDOCE$_1$** and **LDOCE$_2$**. The **Guide to the Dictionary** in **LDOCE$_1$** outlines the policy as follows:

> An IDIOM is usually found under the word that has the most IDIOMATIC meaning. Thus **a bone of contention** is under **bone** because bone is used in a more IDIOMATIC way than contention. If all the words are IDIOMATIC then it will be included under the most unusual word. Thus **a pig in a poke** is under **poke**. If you cannot find the IDIOM under the first word you choose, then look under the other words (...) (pp. xxvi-xxvii)

Longman are trying to provide a linguistic criterion. Instead of referring to 'the most important word' they adduce 'the most IDIOMATIC meaning'. Yet though this criterion looks more practicable the same criticism applies. How is the foreign learner to know which is the most idiomatically used item? The linguistic situation of the learner is more fully taken into account in the treatment of idioms in LDOCE$_2$. 'The most IDIOMATIC meaning' has been replaced by 'MAIN' and this term is explained as follows:

> The dictionary lists idioms at the first MAIN word in the phrase (that is, not at words like **the, something,** or **with**), so **kick the bucket** has its definition at **kick**. But if you look for it at **bucket** you will find a note directing you to the right place. (...) (p. F32)
>
> There are two exceptions to this rule:
>
> 1 If the idiom starts with a VERY common verb (such as **have, get, make**, or **take**) it is shown at the next main word. So **have one's head screwed on** (= to be sensible and practical)
> is shown at **head**, not at **have**.
> 2 If one of the words in the idiom is variable, the idiom is shown at the main INVARIABLE word, so
> **take something with a pinch / grain of salt** (= to not believe something)
> is shown at **salt**, not at **pinch** or **grain**.

That substantial revision has taken place in LDOCE$_2$ can be shown by comparing the relevant entries for the idiom **to hit the nail on the head**:

LDOCE$_1$: **hit^1** ... **7 hit the nail on the head** to be exactly right (in saying something)

LDOCE$_2$: **hit^2** ... **14 hit the nail on the head** to be exactly right in words or action

LDOCE$_1$: **nail^1** ... **4 hit the nail on the head** infml to do or say something exactly right; find the right answer

LDOCE$_2$: **nail^1** ... - see also **hit the nail on the head** (HIT^1)

In LDOCE$_1$ the idiom is not mentioned under **head**. According to the policy advocated in LDOCE$_2$ we would have expected a mention and cross-reference under the noun **head**.

Whether or not affixes are listed within a dictionary depends on the lexicographical theory that underlies a particular reference work and the lexicographical status granted to bound morphemes. Although the total word stock described in EFL dictionaries for advanced learners is limited, word-formational elements should generally be included because of their high decoding and encoding potential. This is taken into adequate account in all the dictionaries under review. They all list affixes but they differ as to where these elements appear. The introduction of the **ALD** tells the foreign users that the dictionary has an affix appendix whose use is recommended because affixes are "small items of the language that are used to build up many English words" (p. xiv). The appendix lists prefixes and suffixes together in alphabetical order. A perusal of the dictionary, however, reveals that the A to Z text also includes affixes. Under the letter A, for instance, the dictionary has entries for **Afro-**, **after-**, **Anglo-**, **ante-**, **anti-**, **arch-**, **ancho-**, and **auto-**. It is not at all clear what the lexicographical justification is for admitting some affixes in the main text and banishing others to the appendix. Some items are even listed in both: **ante-**, **anti-**, **arch-**, **audio-**, and **aut(o)-** (and the definitions given for them vary).

Chambers Universal Learners' Dictionary seems to follow **ALD**'s practice. Some word-formational elements are listed within the dictionary, others are relegated to an appendix. The decision is explained as follows in the appendix:

> A number of combining forms (ie elements such as **aero-**, **-bound**, **micro-**, **ultra-**, **-ward(s)** which form compound words) are to be found in the main text of the dictionary, and are therefore not included in the lists below. (p. 904)

The lists distinguish between prefixes and initial combining forms on the one hand and suffixes and final combining forms on the other. Since there is no rule that tells the user which properties of a combining form make it dictionary-worthy and which only appendix-worthy the whole policy is arbitrary. Instead of easing the users' task of finding a lexical unit within the dictionary, their work is unnecessarily complicated.

It looks as if the **ALD, and** CULD have influenced Longman.

Compared to the **ALD** **LDOCE_1**'s listing of affixes was lexicographically more consistent because bound morphemes were given the same lexicographical status as free morphemes. In the **Guide to the Dictionary** the policy was described as follows:

> All the more important AFFIXes can be found at their own alphabetical place in the dictionary (...) (p. xxvii)

Unfortunately, this clear policy was abandoned in **LDOCE_2** where affixes are listed in the A to Z text of the dictionary as well as in a separate list at the end:

> There is a full list of prefixes and suffixes in the Word Formation section at the back of the dictionary ... But the most common ones are also shown in the main part of the dictionary, with a note directing you to the full list (...) (p. F31)

The criterion adopted - the commonness of the affix - assumes a linguistic competence that foreign users do not have (one may even wonder whether the average native speaker has it). Foreign users are learners of the language, they cannot yet be expected to know what is very common or less common in English. Combining forms that consist of a free morpheme + **-ed** or **-er**, as for instance in **-bellied, -blooded, -brimmed, -breaker** (as in **fat-bellied, cold-blooded, wise-brimmed, law-breaker**) have an exceptional status. In **LDOCE$_1$** they were all listed as main entries, in **LDOCE$_2$** they are not listed in the appendix but as run-on entries after the free morpheme. In **LDOCE$_1$** they were given a grammatical label, **comb.form** for combining form. In **LDOCE$_2$** they have no grammatical specification at all. This seems to reflect the present state of word-formation research where the theoretical status of these units is still controversial.[19]

COBUILD does not tell us anything about their affix policy in the **Guide to the Use of the Dictionary** but a study of the dictionary itself reveals that it lists bound morphemes as headwords; that is, the practice is the one we had in **LDOCE$_1$**.

Once an item has been listed in a dictionary it is provided with a pronunciation transcription. I shall therefore next consider pronunciation in EFL dictionaries. All four dictionaries under review record RP and they all use with slight differences the symbols of the International Phonetic Association.

It is well-known that the third edition of the **ALD** went through two major phases. When the third edition appeared in 1973 it caused something of an outcry. What had happened? The pronunciation bible for most foreign teachers of English is Daniel Jones' **English pronouncing Dictionary** as revised by A C Gimson. Yet the phonetic notation in the third edition did not conform to Jones-Gimson. Instead it had adopted a new transcription system which J Windsor Lewis had developed in his **Concise Pronouncing Dictionary of British and American English** only one year earlier. Teachers were upset. Most of their textbooks and the dictionaries they used followed the Jones-Gimson system. Would they now have to teach two different systems? While the arguments for or against Lewis' new notation were still being debated a new EFL dictionary was published: the **Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English**. In a short span of time the **ALD** had a serious competitor whose phonetic transcription mostly conformed to the **English Pronouncing Dictionary**. The publishers at Oxford University Press recognized the imminent danger and reacted. Not long after the publication of **LDOCE$_1$** they brought out a revised impression of the third edition of **ALD** in which the phonetic notation had been changed back to the Jones-Gimson system.

Of the four dictionaries being considered **LDOCE$_2$** is clearly more innovative and helpful to the users than the others. This can be illustrated as follows:

1. Special combined symbols

In both British and American English there is variation between two pronunciations in words like **definition** and **regular**:

/ˌdefɪˈnɪʃən/ - /ˌdefəˈnɪʃən/ and /ˈregjʊlər/ - /ˈregjələr/. This variation is captured in the combined symbols / $\overset{\text{ɪ}}{\text{ə}}$ / and/ $\overset{\text{ʊ}}{\text{ə}}$ / indicating that either vowel can be used.

2. Stress pattern in compounds

The **ALD, CULD** and **LDOCE$_2$** use the IPA pre-stress superscript for a secondary stress as in /ˌdɪsəˈpɔɪntɪŋ/. **COBUILD** breaks totally with this transcription tradition that we EFL teachers are so used to. Both stress marks are replaced by the same device: boldface point and underlining, as in /dɪsəpɔɪntɪŋ/. In this idiosyncratic system users are obliged to learn that if the transcription shows two underlined boldface syllables, it is the second that carries the main stress. Cf. **photograph** / **photographic**.

But **photostat** (/fəʊ təʊst æ t/) seems especially idiosyncratic both in putting the stress on the final syllable and in having the vowel value 'æ '.

Compound words are particularly tricky for foreign learners. Both the **ALD** and **CULD** put a heavy burden on the users: they are not only expected to know the spelling of the compound but also what the regular stress pattern of compounds is in order to assign it to an unknown item. **COBUILD** users do not fare much better. If the components of a compound are listed individually in the dictionary, the compound is given without pronunciation and without a stress pattern. By contrast, the Longman dictionary assigns to every compound its particular stress pattern, even where each of the elements is individually recorded, as for instance in **digital computer** (/ˌ... .ˈ../).

3. Stress shifts

When compounds are used in connected speech, their stress pattern may change due to an immediately following word. For this possible stress shift Longman uses the sign /◂/, as in the noun **princess** /ˌprɪnˈses◂/. This little sign tells us that the stress patterns in the two sentences are as follows:

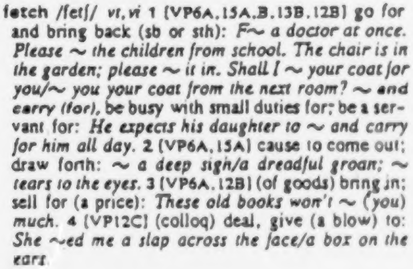
He married a ˌprinˈcess.
I saw ˈPrinˌcess Diana.

The real hallmarks of EFL dictionaries, however, are

(a) the explanations of meanings;
(b) specifications of a word's grammatical behaviour; and
(c) the illustration of the meaning and the syntactical use of a word with real language examples.

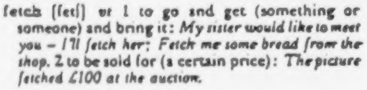
Since these three components are intricately interlinked, I shall treat them together, and I shall do this with a relatively uncomplicated example, the verb to **fetch**. The respective entries in the four dictionaries are:

A.S. Hornby: *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English* (Third edition)



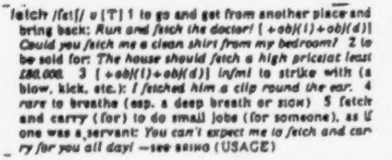
fetch /fetʃ/ *vt,vi* 1 [VP6A,15A,B,13B,12B] go for and bring back (sb or sth): *F~ a doctor at once. Please ~ the children from school. The chair is in the garden; please ~ it in. Shall I ~ your coat for you/~ you your coat from the next room? ~ and carry (for)*, be busy with small duties for; be a servant for: *He expects his daughter to ~ and carry for him all day.* 2 [VP6A,15A] cause to come out; draw forth: *~ a deep sign/a dreadful groan; ~ tears to the eyes.* 3 [VP6A,12B] (of goods) bring in; sell for (a price): *These old books won't ~ (you) much.* 4 [VP12C] (colloq) deal, give (a blow) to: *She ~ed me a slap across the face/a box on the ears.*

Chambers Universal Learners' Dictionary



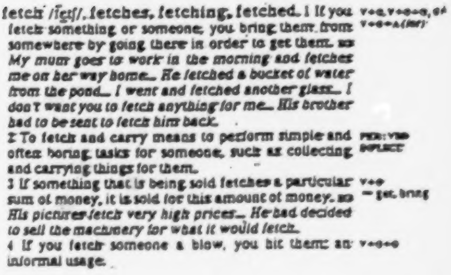
fetch [fetʃ] *vt* 1 to go and get (something or someone) and bring it: *My sister would like to meet you – I'll fetch her; Fetch me some bread from the shop.* 2 to be sold for (a certain price): *The picture fetched £100 at the auction.*

Longman Dictionary of
Contemporary English
(New edition)



fetch /fetʃ/ *v* [T] 1 to go and get from another place and bring back: *Run and fetch the doctor!* [+obj(i)+obj(d)] *Could you fetch me a clean shirt from my bedroom?* 2 to be sold for: *The house should fetch a high price/at least £80,000.* 3 [+obj(i)+obj(d)] *infml* to strike with (a blow, kick, etc.): *I fetched him a clip round the ear.* 4 *rare* to breathe (esp. a deep breath or SIGH) 5 **fetch and carry (for)** to do small jobs (for someone), as if one was a servant: *You can't expect me to fetch and carry for you all day!* —see BRING (USAGE)

Collins COBUILD English
Language Dictionary



fetch /fetʃ/, **fetches, fetching, fetched.** 1 If you fetch something or someone, you bring them from somewhere by going there in order to get them. EG *My mum goes to work in the morning and fetches me on her way home... He fetched a bucket of water from the pond... I went and fetched another glass... I don't want you to fetch anything for me... His brother had to be sent to fetch him back.*	V+O, V+O+O, or V+O+A(for)
2 To **fetch and carry** means to perform simple and often boring tasks for someone, such as collecting and carrying things for them.	PHR: VB INFLECTS
3 If something that is being sold fetches a particular sum of money, it is sold for this amount of money. EG *His pictures fetch very high prices... He had decided to sell the machinery for what it would fetch.*	V+O = get, bring
4 If you fetch someone a blow, you hit them: an informal usage.	V+O+O

Common features are:

1. the grammatical information is given in an abbreviated form;
2. for the explanation of the meanings of words normal print is used;
3. the different senses of a word are numbered;
4. for the examples another printing type is used, Italics.

A striking difference is the entry arrangement in **COBUILD**: the grammatical specification is not integrated into the dictionary entry, it is singled out and put in an extra column to the right of the entry.

Let us begin with grammar. One of the aims of the **ALD** had been to describe the syntactical behaviour of words. It focusses firmly on the verb as the centre of a sentence and addresses the question: which subjects, which complements can it take? Hornby studied the different syntactical possibilities of English very carefully and described them in types of construction, the famous verb patterns. Since space is scarce in a dictionary, he coded them as you can see from the example: VP6A stands for a transitive verb, VP15A is a verb that has to have a direct object plus an adverbial phrase of place, duration or distance, etc. When the first edition of Longman appeared in 1978, the Longman team had extended Hornby's syntactic approach to the English lexicon to other parts of speech: they had not only developed a new coding system for verbs, but also coded noun and adjective complementation which meant a huge step ahead in EFL lexicography. But it also meant greatly increased complexity of notation. Research into dictionary use has shown that foreign learners have difficulties in handling grammatical codes. This prompted Longman to reconsider their coding systems and, as you can see from the example taken from **LDOCE$_2$**, the abbreviations in the new Longman, like **T** for transitive, **obj(i)** for indirect object, **obj(d)** for direct object, are much easier to understand because they link up with traditional grammatical terminology.

A close comparison of the four sample entries reveals that not only the grammatical coding system given varies but also the amount of grammatical information that is provided. The **ALD** is the only dictionary for which **to fetch** is an intransitive as well as a transitive verb. Yet all the codes listed (VP6A, VP12B, VP12C, VP13B, VP15A, VP15B) are codes for transitive verbs. The only intransitive construction in the entry is the idiom **fetch and carry (for)** which is not even provided with a grammatical code.

The **ALD, CULD** and **LDOCE$_2$** all describe **to fetch** as a transitive verb. The coding is different (**vt** in the **ALD** and **CULD**, **v** [T] in **LDOCE$_2$**), but the position is the same: the general grammatical feature precedes the explanation of the meaning. Users of **COBUILD** are not given this overall characteristic. They will have to work it out for themselves on the basis of the codes listed alongside the entry.

For the basic sense of the verb which all dictionaries list as sense **1** the grammatical possibilities range from one to five different constructions. Under the one label **vt CULD** provides two different structural patterns in the examples, the types S-V-O$_d$ and S-V-O$_i$-O$_d$. For the foreign learner **CULD'S** treatment is thus not explicit enough. **LDOCE$_2$** mentions two constructions, [T] and **[+ obj(i) + obj(d)]**, which are each followed by one example. **COBUILD** has the codes V+O, V+O+O and V+O+A (**for**) in the extra column next to sense **1**. One would usually assume that the examples given within the entry follow the order of the codes and that each code is illustrated by an example. This does not hold for the entry under review. The lack of an example for the structural type V+O+O makes one even wonder whether the codes in the extra column at the beginning of the entry are meant to specify the grammatical possibilities for sense 1 or for all the senses of the verb. V+O+O is the usual pattern for sense **4**. Hornby's description is the most detailed and complicated of the four. It is complicated because there is no mnemonic value in the letters and figures of the codes. In addition, the examples are not preceded by the codes which they illustrate. Users have to match code and example for themselves. The paraphrase relationship between

Shall I fetch you your coat
from the next room.

and Shall I fetch your coat for you
from the next room.

is indicated by the codes VP12B and VP13B. The example for code VP15B is

The chair is in the garden; please
fetch it in.

The code covers the particle movement of transitive phrasal verbs, as in

Take off your shoes.
Take your shoes off.
Take them off.
*Take off them.

The verb in the example sentence in the **ALD** is thus **to fetch in** and not **to fetch** which will account for the fact that none of the other dictionaries discusses this structural pattern under the simple verb **to fetch**.

The grammatical descriptions obviously vary according to the overall grammatical system underlying the syntactic analyses in each dictionary. Yet there seems to be a shared interest in making the grammatical terminology used and its abbreviation more transparent for the foreign learners. The **ALD, CULD** and **LDOCE$_2$** underline the fact that a particular grammatical construction has a specific meaning and vice versa that a particular meaning has to be shaped in a specific grammatical form by giving the grammatical information before the meaning description. This interdependence seems to me to be frustrated by the **COBUILD** layout which disjoins word explanation and grammar.

Let us now have a closer look at the definitions. It is common lexicographical practice that the explanation provided after the headword is given in a syntactically reduced form. There is grammatical equivalence between the headword and the definition, that is, if the headword is a verb, as in our example **to fetch**, the information provided in the definition has the grammatical status of a verb, eg 'to go ...', or if the headword is a noun as for instance **man**, it will be a noun phrase, eg 'an adult male human being ...'. The theoretical principle underlying this lexicographical practice is that the definitions should be substitutable for the lemma. In a sentence like **Fetch me some bread from the shop (CULD)** users are expected to replace **fetch** by "go and get (something or someone) and bring it" in order to understand the verb **fetch**. With the necessary adjustment to the context they would get a sentence like **go and get me some bread and bring it**. Substitution thus facilitates understanding. At the same time, however, the syntactically reduced or incomplete definition forms may make comprehension more difficult because users are not familiar with this specific type of language. An explanation of **easy** as 'not difficult', for instance, is unlikely to cause any problems. In a definition of the type 'that can be done, made, gained, etc without great difficulty or effort ...' (**LDOCE$_2$**) they may be puzzled by the item **that**, by the relative clause that has no antecedent. The relative clause is a semantic-syntactic representation of the adjective. It cannot immediately be substituted for the adjective; the substitution presupposes a mental operation on the part of the users so that **an easy task** becomes **a task** ' that can be done ... without great difficulty or effort ...'. Because of such difficulties **COBUILD** has adopted a different style for the definitions. It provides full sentences in which the item to be explained is used, eg

> If you **fetch** something or someone,
> you bring them from somewhere
> by going there in order to get them.

An interesting linguistic feature to be noted is that **COBUILD** does not use the third person indefinite pronoun **one**, but the second pronoun **you**, thus addressing the dictionary user. Occasionally the user may be taken aback by this definition style, if he or she is for example addressed as a serious criminal: the meaning of the verb **murder** for instance reads as follows: "**2** If you **murder** someone, you kill them deliberately and in an unlawful way (...)".

The smaller a dictionary is, the more its definitions tend to be synonyms of the headword. This definition style of providing one or more synonyms instead of an explicit analytical description of the meaning of the lexical item is still quite common in desk-size general-purpose dictionaries, though a gradual change toward more explicitness can be observed in modern English monolingual dictionaries. An analytical definition is provided and a synonym then added. In EFL dictionaries definitions by synonyms are avoided, and we may judge the helpfulness of these reference works for the foreign learner by their (predominating) definition style.

The typical difference in the definition style between general-purpose dictionaries and EFL ones may be illustrated with two examples, the noun **dike, dyke** and the verb **to dip**. In monolingual English general-purpose dictionaries the noun **dike, dyke** is defined as follows:

Chambers Concise 20th: Century Dictionary (Chambers)20	"... a trench, or the earth dug out and thrown up; a mound raised to prevent inundation (...)"

The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Current English (COD)21 : "**1.** n. ditch; || natural water course; low wall esp. of turf. **2.** embankment, long ridge, dam, against flooding, esp one of those in Holland against sea; (...)"

Collins Dictionary of the English Language (Collins)22 : "... **1.** an embankment constructed to prevent flooding or keep out the sea. **2.** a ditch or watercourse. **3.** a bank made of earth excavated for and placed alongside a ditch (...)"

Compare now the definitions in our EFL dictionaries:

ALD : "... **1** ditch (for carrying away water from land). **2** long wall of earth, etc. (to keep back water and prevent flooding (...)"

CULD : "... **1** A ditch. **2** an embankment or wall."

LDOCE$_2$: "... **1** a wall or bank built to keep back water and prevent flooding - compare DAM **2** esp. BrE a narrow passage dug to carry water away; ditch (...)"

COBUILD : "...**1** a **dyke** is a thick wall that is built to stop water flooding onto very low-lying land from a river or from the sea (...)"

Of the three general-purpose dictionaries **Chambers** and the **COD** are most given to a definition style by means of synonyms (**a trench; a ditch, a mound/a ditch; embankment**). The more recent **Collins Dictionary of the English Language**, - the first edition appeared in 1979, whereas the first editions of **Chambers** and the **COD** go back to 1901 and 1911 respectively - shows the more analytical, explanatory definition style characteristic of present-day English lexicography. Of the four EFL dictionaries **CULD** is clearly the least helpful for the foreign learner. He or she is supposed to know the meaning of **ditch** and **embankment** to understand the meaning of **dike, dyke**.

An illustration of a different part of speech, the verb to **dip**, manifests the following characteristics:

Chambers : "... to immerse for a time; to lower; to lower and raise again (as a flag): to baptise by immersion: to lift by dipping (usu. with up): (...)"

COD : "... 1. v.t. put or let down into liquid, immerse; dye thus; make (candle) by immersing wick in hot tallow (...)"

Collins : "... 1. to plunge or be plunged quickly or briefly into a liquid, esp. to wet or coat (...)"

Again, **Collins** is the general-purpose dictionary that is most explicit and explanatory.

ALD : "... put, lower, (sth) into a liquid: to dip one's pen into the ink; to dip sheep immerse them in a liquid that disinfects them (...)"

CULD : "... to lower into any liquid for a moment ... **2** vi to slope downwards ... **3** vt to lower the beam of (car headlights) (...)"

LDOCE$_2$: "... to put in or into a liquid for a moment **2** ... to (cause to) drop slightly ... **3** ... to pass (animals through a bath containing a chemical that kills insects (...)"

COBUILD : "... **1** If you **dip** something or if it **dips** into a liquid, it goes into the liquid for a short time and then quickly comes out again ... **2** If you **dip** into something such as a bowl or your pocket, you put your hand into it so that you can take something out of it ... **3** If something **dips**, it makes a downward movement, usually quite quickly (...)"

The **ALD** entry uses such verbs as **immerse** and **disinfect** which of course presuppose a more comprehensive vocabulary knowledge on the part of the learners than such verbs as **to put, to lower, to go**, etc.

A close study of the vocabulary used in the definitions provided in general-purpose dictionaries and EFL dictionaries reveals another characteristic difference between these two types of dictionary. The words used in general-purpose dictionaries are often more specialized and may thus contribute to more precision. EFL compilers know that the vocabulary knowledge of their envisaged users is restricted and therefore usually endeavour to define lexical items without words that are more specialized than the items to be defined. All publishers claim to have kept the language of explanation as simple as possible. Yet EFL dictionaries are written by native speakers and it is not always easy for them to know what is "simple" for a foreign learner. Take for instance sense **4** of the verb **to fetch** in the **ALD**: ".. deal, give (a blow) to." **Give** would have been easy; **deal** as the first explanation, above all in the context of **to deal a blow**, is idiomatic and not "simple" at all. The only EFL dictionary that has solidly substantiated the 'simplicity' claim is Longman: its word explanations are written in a restricted vocabulary of 2000 items. Learners who have internalized these items and their commonest meanings should be able to understand all the definitions in the dictionary. This 'controlled defining vocabulary' is listed at the end of the dictionary.

The meaning of a word can, of course, also, and sometimes even best, be illustrated by a picture or drawing. Of our four EFL dictionaries the **ALD** and **LDOCE$_2$** are the only ones to use this means. In the present state of lexicographical theory and practice pictorial illustrations seem to be distributed rather randomly within a dictionary. Longman has taken an interesting step in its second edition by extending pictorial illustrations from nouns to verbs, adjectives, and prepositions.

The meaning of a good number of closed-category items cannot be described in the same way as that of the open category nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs. Their meaning often cannot be paraphrased and there are no synonyms. Conjunctions like **that** and **and**, for instance, are such function words. All a lexicographer can do in such cases is to describe how the items in question are used. Such descriptions are sometimes referred to as functional definitions. The **ALD** and **LDOCE$_2$** tend to put functional definitions between brackets:

ALD : **and** ... conj **1** (connecting words, clauses, sentences): a table and four chairs ... **3** (In constructions replacing an if-clause): Work hard and you will pass ... **4** (indicating intensive repetition or continuation): for hours and hours (...)

LDOCE$_2$: ... conj **1** (used to join two things, esp. words of the same type or parts of sentences of the same importance) as well as; also: a knife and fork ... **2** then; afterwards: She knocked on the door and went in ... **3** (expresses a result or explanation): Water the seeds and they will grow ... **4** (joins repeated words) **a** to show that something continues to happen (...)

Foreign learners may be puzzled by this practice. They are used to finding definitions in an unbracketed form and will therefore skip bracketed information in search for the central core of the definition. There often is no such core part, there are only example sentences. I think that it is time lexicographers demonstrated that different parts of speech have different types of definitions and that they all have the same lexicographical treatment. The use of brackets suggests secondary status. It is **Chambers Universal Learners' Dictionary** that is progressive in this respect:

CULD : **and** ... conj **1** joining two statements, pieces of information etc: I opened the door and went inside ... **2** in addition to: 2 and 2 makes 4 ... **3** as a result of which: Go away and I shall never speak to you again ... **4** (inf) used instead of 'to' of the infinitive of a verb: Do try and come!

In **COBUILD** the use of a function word is described in full sentences; that is, we have the same definition style as for open-class categories:

COBUILD : **and** ... **1 And** is used to link words in the following ways: **1.1.** simply to link two or more words, groups, or clauses. EG ... my mother and father ... **1.2.** to link two nouns or pronouns that refer to the same person or thing. EG The television director and critic, Iain Johnstone, is here (...)

The lexicographical description of some words requires an explicit and precise description of the pragmatic situation in which they are used or in which the activity denoted by them is performed. This can be illustrated by means of the items **hello (hallo, hullo)** and **to shake hands**. In what situations is the greeting **hello (hallo, hullo)** used in English? Who can '**hello (hallo, hullo)**' whom in English? The information that we are given in our four EFL dictionaries is as follows:

ALD : **hullo** (also **hallo, hello**) ... int used as a greeting, to call attention, to express surprise, and to answer a call, eg on the telephone.

CULD : **hello, hallo, hullo** ... interjs, ncus a word used as a greeting, to attract attention, or to express surprise: Say hello to your aunt (...)

LDOCE$_2$: **hel.lo** .../ also **hallo, hullo** BrE - interj, n ... **1a** (the usual word used when greeting someone): Hello, John! How are you? (...)

COBUILD : **hello** ... also spelled **hallo, hullo. 1** You say **'Hello'** to someone **1.1.** when you are greeting them or when you are meeting them for the first time in the course of a day. EG ... He gave me a cheery 'hello' as we passed in the street (...)

The most common use of **hello** is the first sense in all four dictionaries. The most explicit description is the one in **COBUILD** because it tells the user that the greeting is used "when you are meeting them for the first time in the course of a day". Yet none of the dictionaries indicates that (except on the telephone) **hello** (**hallo, hullo**) is an informal greeting that presupposes a certain degree of familiarity between the persons involved and that it disregards differences in social position. It is not contrasted with **Hi!** and **Good morning!** either. Such a comparison would for instance have revealed that the usual form of greeting for someone who enters his/her office in the morning and finds his/her colleagues already in is "Good morning", and similarly, that a house guest who comes down for breakfast and finds the host family already gathered around the table will say "Good morning" and not "Hello". And finally, the users are not told whether the form of greeting which is followed by the addressee's name is politer or possibly even the only polite form.

The pragmatic context of situation is closely linked with culture-specific characteristics. The occasions when one shakes hands, for instance, differ considerably between the English- and German-speaking communities. Do our EFL dictionaries tell the foreign learner in which situations Englishmen shake hands? The entries in question are:

ALD : **hand^1** ... **shake~s with sb: shake sb's~**, grasp his ~ as a greeting, or to express agreement, etc (...)

CULD : **hand** ... nc ... **shake hands with (someone)/shake someone's hand** to grasp a person's (usu right) hand, in one's own (usu right) hand, as a form of greeting, as a sign of agreement etc: The leaders of the two sides shook hands to show that the dispute was over (...)

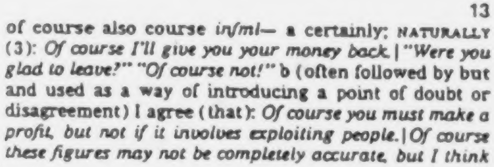
LDOCE$_2$: **shake^1** ... **2** [I;T] to take and hold (someone's right hand) in one's own for a moment, often moving it up and down, as a sign of greeting, goodbye, agreement, or pleasure: The two men **shook hands (with each other)** (...)

COBUILD : **shake** ... **9** If you **shake hands** with someone, **shake** their **hand**, or **shake** them **by the hand**, you hold their right hand in your own for a few moments, sometimes moving it up and down slightly, when you are meeting them, saying goodbye to them, or congratulating them. EG Elijah and I shook hands and said good night (...)

Longman and **COBUILD** are the only dictionaries that mention leave-taking as a typical situation. **LDOCE$_2$**'s reference to a 'sign of pleasure' strikes one as rather vague, it could cover the case of congratulation mentioned by **COBUILD**.

None of the dictionaries mentions a sexual difference or specifies whether every greeting or leave-taking is accompanied by a hand-shaking. A hand-shaking as a greeting among Anglo-Saxons usually presupposes that the partners have not seen each other for quite some time and its use as a goodbye means that one does not expect to meet again for a long time. This necessary time-span is not at all a precondition for Germans who may see each other every day and shake hands when they meet and separate.

The discussion of the items **hello** and **to shake hands** has shown that there is still room to improve the description of such lexical items that are used in specific speech situations. In the wake of general linguistic research the pragmatic use of language is receiving increased attention in English dictionary-making. This development is reflected in the two most recent EFL dictionaries, **LDOCE$_2$** and **COBUILD**, as can be seen from the example **of course**. In the **ALD** the meaning given is "naturally, certainly" and in **CULD** it is "naturally or obviously", similar to the explanation in monolingual general-purpose dictionaries. Now compare the entries in **LDOCE$_2$** and **COBUILD**:



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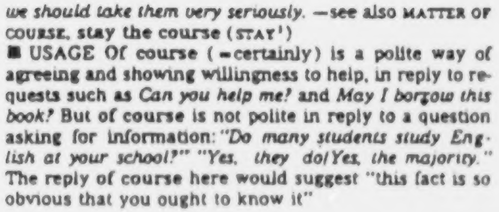
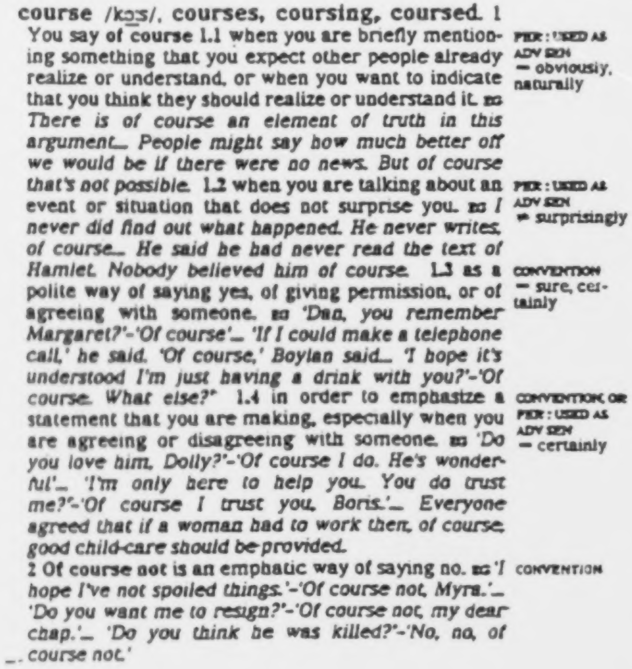
of course also **course** *infml*— **a** certainly; NATURALLY (3): *Of course I'll give you your money back.* | *"Were you glad to leave?" "Of course not!"* **b** (often followed by but and used as a way of introducing a point of doubt or disagreement) I agree (that): *Of course you must make a profit, but not if it involves exploiting people.* | *Of course these figures may not be completely accurate, but I think*



we should take them very seriously. —see also MATTER OF COURSE, stay the course (STAY¹)

■ USAGE Of course (=certainly) is a polite way of agreeing and showing willingness to help, in reply to requests such as *Can you help me?* and *May I borrow this book?* But of course is not polite in reply to a question asking for information: *"Do many students study English at your school?" "Yes, they do/Yes, the majority."* The reply of course here would suggest "this fact is so obvious that you ought to know it"

The entry tells you how to use the item when you disagree; it states that it is a polite answer in reply to a request; and it tells us when you are not allowed to use it. **COBUILD** supplies similar excellent explanations, but does not mention the restriction that the item should not be used as a reply to an information request.



course /kɔːs/, **courses, coursing, coursed.** 1 You say **of course** 1.1 when you are briefly mentioning something that you expect other people already realize or understand, or when you want to indicate that you think they should realize or understand it. □ *There is of course an element of truth in this argument... People might say how much better off we would be if there were no news. But of course that's not possible.* 1.2 when you are talking about an event or situation that does not surprise you. □ *I never did find out what happened. He never writes, of course... He said he had never read the text of Hamlet. Nobody believed him of course.* 1.3 as a polite way of saying yes, of giving permission, or of agreeing with someone. □ *'Dan, you remember Margaret?'–'Of course'... 'If I could make a telephone call,' he said. 'Of course,' Boylan said... 'I hope it's understood I'm just having a drink with you?'–'Of course. What else?'* 1.4 in order to emphasize a statement that you are making, especially when you are agreeing or disagreeing with someone. □ *'Do you love him, Dolly?'–'Of course I do. He's wonderful'... 'I'm only here to help you. You do trust me?'–'Of course I trust you, Boris.'... Everyone agreed that if a woman had to work then, of course, good child-care should be provided.*

2 **Of course not** is an emphatic way of saying no. □ *'I hope I've not spoiled things.'–'Of course not, Myra.'... 'Do you want me to resign?'–'Of course not, my dear chap.'... 'Do you think he was killed?'–'No, no, of course not.'*

PHR : USED AS ADV SEN = obviously, naturally

PHR : USED AS ADV SEN ≠ surprisingly

CONVENTION = sure, certainly

CONVENTION, OR PHR : USED AS ADV SEN = certainly

CONVENTION

I conclude this review with a discussion of what guidance our dictionaries provide in stylistic matters.

As we all know, learning a language does not only mean acquiring its vocabulary, knowing how to spell and pronounce its words and having internalized its grammatical rules. Using language is always social interaction and thus part of our social behaviour. We adjust our language to the social situation in which we find ourselves. Social behaviour is characterized by its DO's and DO NOT's and the disregard of its rules will cause sanctions for the trespasser. This includes language behaviour as well, and a foreigner will more easily be forgiven a faulty pronunciation or incorrect grammar than for instance a rude choice of words in a formal situation. And the more native-like the foreigners' command of the language is, the more they are expected to master the socio-stylistic variation of the language and the stronger the social judgement when they make a linguistic blunder. Another important stylistic level is the temporal one which registers changes in language use. Words and meanings grow out of use and new ones enter the language. Foreign language teaching is geared towards the middle path which is neither marked for archaisms nor for neologisms.

All our ELF dictionaries recognize the need for guidance in stylistic matters. They all provide such guidance in the form of stylistic or **usage labels** which are put in front of the item in question. Such usage labels are for instance **informal, formal, taboo** or **old, obsolete**. The labels themselves vary from dictionary to dictionary and so does their number. If these stylistic labels are to be of any use to the foreign learners, the lexicographical treatment has to meet three requirements.

1. The descriptive reference point has to be stated. It is self-evident that **formal**, for instance, means something different when the reference point (and unmarked stylistic level) is the language between educated adult speakers or when it is everyday conversation between teenagers.
2. Everyone has a different idea of what he or she regards as 'colloquial', 'formal', etc. It is therefore vital that the dictionary describes what the labels stand for.
3. Since the content of these labels depends on the number of distinctions made for each parameter, **all** the labels have to be listed and explained, so that the users are aware of the whole scale.

The treatment in the dictionaries under review is not wholly satisfactory.

With the exception of the taboo label the ALD does not describe its stylistic categories so that we do not know what the difference is between, for instance, a **derogatory** use and a **pejorative** one, or a **facetious**, a **humorous**, an **ironical** and a **jocular** one. Chambers explains its stylistic labels in the introduction, but because of its failure to specify its standard level we do not know what constitutes the neutral level to judge formal or informal language use. Longman is the most satisfactory in this respect: it explains its stylistic labels and lists the whole scale in the introduction. It is rather suprising that **COBUILD** does not give us a full explanatory list of its style values. This runs counter to the development towards more explicitness in modern lexicography. A partial explanation may be the avoidance of abbreviations as can be seen from the example fetch, and a style that prefers full descriptive sentences. Yet the user must be able to assess the scale of distinctions.

In addition, each of the EFL dictionaries has an interesting feature of its own. The **ALD** occasionally includes statements on changing language use where it gives the older or rarer word and the newer or more common one. Examples are

> **ac.ci.dence** /'æksɪdəns'/ n [U] [gram] that part of grammar which deals with meaningful differences in the form of a word, eg have, has, had; foot, feet, etc the more usu term is now morphology(...)
>
> **af.fect** /ə'fekt/vt [VP6\A] **1** have an influence or impression on; act on ... **4** **well /ill ~ ed (towards)**, well/ill disposed (the more usu word) or inclined towards (...)
>
> **ask** /ɑ:sk US: æsk/ vt, vi (pt, pp asked) **1** [VP6A, 12C, 14 often with the indirect object omitted in 12C] call for an answer to; request information or service ... **5 ask the banns**, (old use; now usu put up or publish) publish them.

A salient lexicographical feature in **CULD** is its explicit comparisons of degrees of formality. In the introduction to the dictionary the new practice is described as follows:

> Some words which are not particularly formal but which have a less formal, more commonly used equivalent have been labelled (more formal than), eg **acquire** is labelled (more formal than **get**); **regret** is labelled (more formal than **be sorry**) (p. xii)

Since advanced foreign learners are expected to have a certain grasp of the formality scales of the English word stock, these explicit comparisons of degrees of formality are most welcome to the foreign student and teacher. Unfortunately **CULD** does not exploit this new feature. If one item is 'more formal than' another, then the latter is obviously 'less formal than' the former. **CULD** is not consistent in reversing the comparison. To stay with the two examples **acquire/get** and **regret/be sorry**: Although **acquire** and **regret** are said to be more formal than **get** and **be sorry**, there are no references under **get** and **be sorry** that they are less formal than **acquire** and **regret** respectively.

Longman were quick to realize the value of this feature and so it appeared in their EFL dictionary that followed the publication of **CULD**, the **Active Study Dictionary**.

The characteristic feature of **LDOCE**$_1$ was its usage notes at the end of an entry, eg

> **due to** /ˈ../ prep because of; caused by: His illness was due to bad food
> USAGE Compare **due to** and **owing to**: As **due** is an adjective, it seems that **due to** should really be used only with nouns: His absence was due to the storm. But educated speakers are now beginning to use **due to** with verbs, treating **due to** like **owing to** or **because of**: He arrived late **due to/ owing to** the storm

In **LDOCE**$_2$ Longman have added specific **language notes** that "give detailed treatment of a number of key areas of language use. They deal with points of grammar, style, and especially pragmatics."

The **ALD** and **CULD** are now being revised. It will be interesting to see what new features they will bring to EFL lexicography.

FOOTNOTES

[1] *There is a good account of Harold E Palmer's work in Bonger's book, Bongers, H,* ***The History and Principles of Vocabulary Control****. Woerden, 1947.*

[2] *Naganuma, K, "The History of the Advanced Learner's Dictionary: A S Hornby, ISED and Kaitakusha, Tokyo", in Strevens, P, ed.,* ***In Honour of A S Hornby****. Oxford, 1978, pp. 11-13; p. 11. Cf. also Ogawa, Y, "Hornby Osei: A tribute from Japan", in Strevens, P, ed.,* ***In Honour of A S Hornby****. Oxford, 1978, pp. 8-10.*

[3] *Hornby, A S - Gatenby, E V - Wakefield, H,* ***Idiomatic and Syntactic English Dictionary****. Tokyo, 1942.*

[4] *Hornby, A S - Gatenby, E V - Wakefield, H,* ***The Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English****. Second edition, London, 1963.*

[5] *Hornby, A S, with the assistance of A P Cowie & G W Lewis,* ***Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English****. Third edition, London, 1974.*

[6] *Procter, P, ed.,* ***Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English****. Harlow and London, 1978.*

[7] *Kirkpatrick, E M, ed.,* ***Chambers Universal Learners' Dictionary****. Edinburgh, 1980.*

[8] *Sinclair, J, ed.,* ***Collins COBUILD English Language Dictionary****. London and Glasgow, 1987. See also Sinclair, J M, ed.,* ***Looking Up. An account of the COBUILD Project in lexical computing****. London and Glasgow, 1987, and Willis, J and D,* ***Collins COBUILD English Course****. (Student's Book 1), London and Glasgow, 1988.*

[9] Summers, D, ed., **Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English**. New Edition, Harlow, 1987. See also the accompanying work books, McAlpin, J, **Longman Dictionary Skills Handbook**, Harlow, 1988, and the **Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English. Teacher's Guide**.

[10] Cowie, A P and R Mackin, **Oxford Dictionary of Current Idiomatic English**. Vol. 1: **Verbs with Prepositions and Particles**. London, 1975; Cowie, A P - Mackin, R and McCaig, I R, **Oxford Dictionary of Current Idiomatic English**. Vol. 2: **Phrase, Clause & Sentence Idioms**. Oxford, 1983.

[11] McArthur, T, **Longman LEXICON of Contemporary English**. Harlow, 1981.

[12] Benson, M; Benson, E and Ilson, R, **The BBI Combinatory Dictionary of English. A Guide to Word Combinations**. Amsterdam - Philadelphia, 1986. Cf. also Benson, M - Benson, E - Ilson, R, **Lexicographic Description of English**. Amsterdam, 1988.

[13] There is an ever-increasing number of small-size EFL dictionaries which cannot be dealt with in this paper and in which only some of the features to be listed are relevant.

[14] Cockeram, H, **The English Dictionarie; or, An Interpreter of Hard English Words** ..., London, 1623.

[15] Quirk, R, "The Image of the Dictionary", in Quirk, R, **The Linguist and the English Language**. London, 1974, pp. 148-163. This is a corrected reprint of the paper "The Social Impact of Dictionaries in the UK", in McDavid, R I Jr. - Duckert, A R, edd., **Lexicography in English**. New York, 1973, pp. 76-88.

[16] Greenbaum, S - Meyer, C F - Taylor, J, "The Image of the Dictionary for American College Students", **Dictionaries** 6, 1984, pp. 31-52.

[17] Cf. in this respect Ilson, R, "Etymological Information: Can it Help Our Students?" **ELT Journal** 37, 1983, pp. 76-82.

[18] Summers, D, ed., **Longman Active Study Dictionary**. Harlow, 1983.

[19] Cf. Stein, G, "The Best of British and American Lexicography", **Dictionaries** 1, 1979, pp. 1-23, "Word-Formation in Modern English Dictionaries", in Ilson, R, ed., **Dictionaries, Lexicography and Language Learning**, Oxford, 1985, pp. 35-44, and "Word-Formation in Dr Johnson's Dictionary of the English Language". **Dictionaries** 6, 1984, pp. 66-112.

[20] Davidson, G W, Seaton, M A, Simpson, J, ed., **Chambers Concise 20th Century Dictionary**. Edinburgh. 1985.

[21] Sykes, J B, ed., **The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Current English**. Seventh edition, Oxford, 1982.

[21] Hanks, P, ed., **Collins Dictionary of the English Language**. London and Glasgow, 1979.

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LEARNERS' DICTIONARIES - RECENT ADVANCES AND DEVELOPMENTS

A P Cowie

1 INTRODUCTION

The past ten years or so have seen a remarkable expansion in the number and variety of new English learners' dictionaries (LDs) coming onto the EFL market. LDs are rightly perceived by students and teachers as information resources which combine the advantages of broad coverage, moderate size and relatively low cost; and the opportunities of a world-wide market, especially for one-volume general dictionaries such as the Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English (LDOCE) or the Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary (OALD), have greatly intensified competition between the major publishers. But it would be a mistake to see recent developments purely in commercial terms. Advances in EFL lexicography over the past decade have drawn upon, and contributed to, a steady growth of interest among applied linguists in the lexicon in general and vocabulary teaching in particular (Carter, 1987; Carter and McCarthy, 1988; Cowie, 1987a). It is significant, also, that as in the earliest days of the learner's dictionary, many present-day LD compilers have backgrounds in linguistics and language teaching, and are therefore well placed to draw on relevant theoretical developments and the findings of research (Atkins et al, 1987, Maingay and Rundell, 1987). A closely related process has been the increasing professionalization of lexicography. Since 1978, no less than six international conferences devoted to the theory and practice of dictionary-making have been organized in Britain alone, one consequence being a growing cross-fertilization between individual compilers and different dictionary traditions (Hartmann, 1984; Ilson, 1986). There are signs, for instance, that English LDs are beginning to draw on a very rich Eastern European tradition in lexical description and learner lexicography (Cowie, 1981b, 1986; Tomaszczyk, 1981), while Ilson has remarked on the relevance to EFL dictionary design of American children's dictionaries, which have pioneered the imaginative use of pictures, and the creative use of examples to complement definitions (Ilson, 1985: 3). In parallel with these welcome developments has gone an increased use of the computer, not only in compilation and editing, but perhaps more significantly in the gathering of data, both to determine the inclusion of a given word or sense and to provide illustrative examples (Knowles, 1984; Calzolari et al, 1987).

But it is one thing to increase the descriptive scope and sophistication of a dictionary and quite another to make its riches accessible to a wide range of learners overseas. As a practising lexicographer, I am conscious of the danger of widening the gap which already exists between the sophistication of some aspects of dictionary design and the user's often rudimentary reference skills (Cowie, 1981a). Nor is the position improved if we as lexicographers make unsupported assertions about this or that innovative feature. Any supposed improvement must be judged according to the adequacy of the dictionary user. My aim in the present paper will be to bring some of the major design features of the LD under scrutiny, drawing my criteria from an expanding and vigorous critical literature.

2 PATTERNS AND CODES

The most recently published LDs are the outcome of several interrelated developments, some of which go back over half a century. Indeed, in certain of its key features, the EFL dictionary of today represents the high point of an evolution initiated in the 1930s by three major figures in ELT - Harold Palmer, A S Hornby and Michael West (Howatt, 1984). Though, as we shall see later, students tend to refer to their LDs as readers rather than writers, they also need to write in and translate into the foreign language, and the particular value of the contribution of Palmer and Hornby lay in their ability to describe and make accessible those grammatical forms and patterns which represent major problems for the learner when 'encoding'.

The first problem which needs to the tackled when attempting to provide grammatical information in a learner's dictionary is the choice of a suitable model for the dictionary's own grammatical scheme (say for verb complementation or noun classification). In practice, editors have drawn on the most authoritative and widely used grammars of their time. Hornby's indebtedness to the scholarly traditional grammarians - Jespersen, Poutsma, Kruisinga and Zandvoort, for example, is acknowledged in his Guide to Patterns (1954), which incorporates the same scheme of 25 Verb patterns used in the first and second editions of OALD (1948, 1983). The inclusion of this system in a major LD was an event of the first importance, expressly designed to help the user with composition. The passage of time, however, has shown up certain descriptive weaknesses. Though Hornby organized the patterns into two major groups, transitive and intransitive, his structural description of individual patterns contains inconsistencies. At times these are made up of clause elements ('Vb. x Direct Object), at others of constituent classes ('Vb. x Conjunctive X Clause') and at others of a blend of both ('Vb. x Objective Adjective'), and to this extent the user is prevented from preceiving functional similarities beneath differences of constituent structure (Cowie forthcoming). The present edition of OALD (1989) incorporates, in the user's guide, a scheme describing all patterns at both levels, so that for example *He likes fish, He likes to relax and He likes relaxing* are all analysed as 'subject x transitive verb x direct object', as well as with the appropriate phrase and dependent clause labels. The purpose of making syntactic parallels overt where they might otherwise have only been guessed at is of course to render the scheme more truly systematic and to speed the learning process.

Whether such a system should be presented in the entries themselves in all its fullness is of course another question. Various ingenious attempts have been made in recent years to reconcile the requirements of economy, clarity and memorability in setting out grammatical information in general and specialized LDs (Lemmens and Vekker, 1986). This was a problem of which the earliest EFL lexicographers were clearly aware, and it was H E Palmer who pioneered the notion of pattern codes as a method of solving it. In **A Grammar of English Words** (1938), Palmer gave to each pattern a code number and inserted the appropriate number (or numbers) into the meaning-divisions of the entries, at the same time providing an illustrated treatment in the Introduction to which the codes would refer the user (Cowie forthcoming). Unfortunately, not all students are inclined to master codes included in LDs for their convenience. In a study of dictionary use at one French university, Bejoint (1981) found that students seldom referred to coding systems for syntactic patterns, while in seeking explanations for inadequate dictionary use among similar students in Germany, Herbst and Stein (1987) point to poor knowledge of the most elementary grammatical terms and categories.

Clearly, much needs to be done to bring students to a satisfactory level of reference skill. But much has already been done, in recognition of students' known difficulties, to make LDs more 'user-friendly'. As regards the presentation of grammatical information, two tendencies are worth noting. The first is to make codes indicate more directly the categories they refer to (Cowie, 1984; Heath, 1982). The earlier and later verb pattern codes devised by Hornby for the OALD were quite opaque: there is nothing in VP6A, for instance, to suggest 'Vb x direct object noun or pronoun'. In contrast, the first edition of LDOCE (1978) introduced an elaborate system of labels that was at least partly mnemonic: I, T and D, for example denote intransitive, transitive and ditransitive verbs (ie those used with both a direct and an indirect object). In the more recently published Collins COBUILD Dictionary (1987) standard abbreviations for class and clause element labels (eg N sing; V + O + A) are set in the margin alongside entries; these too are intended to encourage memorization, though some combinations are forbiddingly complex.

An alternative to (or as many would insist, necessary addition to) clearer labelling as a means of indicating syntactic patterns is the extensive use of illustrative examples. The Chambers Universal Learners' Dictionary (CULD) is unique among advanced-level dictionaries in almost dispensing with labels altogether;

but all major LDs now strive to provide very many examples, whether in support of abstract formulations or not.

3 EXAMPLES: AUTHENTIC OR INVENTED?

The need to provide an abundance of examples in LDs, suited to a wide range of functions, is beyond argument or challenge. Until quite recently, too, the question of where examples were to come from was relatively uncontroversial. The recent appearance of Collins COBUILD, however, has reopened an earlier, short-lived discussion of whether examples should be invented, as they still are in the majority of learners' dictionaries, or taken from naturally occurring texts. The earlier contribution to the debate was from Hornby (1965), who came down firmly on the side of invented examples. The advantage of made-up examples, he observed, is that they can be made to include detail, whether grammatical or semantic, which throws light on the meaning of the entry. Invented material can, as it were, be judiciously shaped in the learner's interests (cf Cowie, 1978).

Such examples get rather short shrift from the Chief Editor of COBUILD, John Sinclair (though without explicit reference to Hornby). Sinclair addresses the issue as follows: ' . . . invented examples are really part of the explanations. They have no independent authority or reason for their existence, and they are constructed to refine the explanations and in many cases to clarify the explanations. They give no reliable guide to composition in English and would be very unreliable if applied to that task. . . . Usage cannot be invented, it can only be recorded.' (Sinclair 1987: XV)

This puts the case far too one-sidedly. Consider first the narrow range of functions to which Sinclair consigns made-up examples. In actual practice, of course, invented examples are simply not limited to the narrowly supportive roles of 'refining' and 'clarifying' definitions, (though they may on occasion be concocted for that purpose). Indeed, editors are constantly constructing examples with the user's productive needs in mind. Such examples, moreover, often achieve their effect precisely because of some pedagogically contrived detail of arrangement or typography (Cowie, 1987b). These are points that will be developed and illustrated below.

As regards material from naturally occurring texts, we should be careful not to accord it a sacred status. The editorial team for the new edition of OALD included a practising novelist. Should we welcome his literary output as a valid addition to our dictionary corpus, but cast doubt on the naturalness and general suitability of his made-up examples? The point, of course, is that no sharp distinction can be drawn between the two. Then again, the vagaries of distribution can play tricks on the hopeful lexicographer. A large-scale corpus may provide rich evidence for the semantic classification of keep, top or light (Moon, 1987), but form no sounder a basis for the treatment of an idiom (eg the variants of raise one's hackles) than a traditional reading programme (Hanks, 1988). We should note, too, that since the distinction between a corpus and the evidence of one's introspection is not clear-cut, the former can serve as material for analysis prior to compilation, as well as directly for illustrative purposes. As Greenbaum makes clear, grammarians (and by implication lexicographers) can use an existing corpus introspectively, manipulating examples to show potential variation, and thereby going beyond what is shown in the text (1988: 85). Indeed, such manipulation is often essential, as when we need evidence of non-variation. Given an example such as Stop pushing your brother about!, we need to transpose the particle (producing *Stop pushing about your brother!) in order to establish the unacceptability of the latter, which will of course seldom if ever occur naturally.

Analysis of this kind - to classify, or to check on acceptability - is a preliminary to the actual business of compiling entries. But as I suggested earlier, adaptation may be necessary at this level too. This takes a number of readily identifiable forms. Regular users of LDs, as of other dictionaries, will observe that largely for reasons of economy, many examples are isolated and self sufficient phrases or sentences (Cowie, 1987b). The emphasis here is on self-sufficient. Whilst naturally-occurring sentences often only establish their full meanings by referring to a wider context (running the risk, when uprooted, of leaving behind crucial explanatory detail) the dictionary example cannot usually go outside itself for total clarification. The task of the lexicographer, then, is to invent or select a self-contained sentence which elucidates the meaning and use of the headword while contriving to be natural at the same time. It is difficult to strike a balance between these requirements, but the following example from CULD manages very well:

> giddy . . . She was exhausted after her giddy round of parties and dances.

Here several pieces of information (collocation with round, the presence of parties and dances suggesting the frivolous nature of the behaviour concerned) are in place; and all is conveyed without strain within the limits of a sentence.

As can be seen from comparing the function of that example with the use of sentences (discussed earlier) to flesh out grammatical patterns, dictionary examples are called on to serve a variety of purposes. But the constant need for economy means that a given example must often fulfil several functions at once (Cowie, 1978). The example quoted just above, for instance, illustrates the sense of the adjective but also its tendency to premodify the noun. Now the likelihood of a naturally occurring example being suitable for a variety of illustrative purposes is of course remote. Such understandable shortcomings do not amount to a case for excluding corpus data from learners' dictionaries. But they do indicate the need for a balanced and flexible approach to the use of such material. A possible model for such an approach is the Oxford Dictionary of Current Idiomatic English, which juxtaposes unedited citations and a wide range of made-up examples (Drysdale, 1987).

4 THE LANGUAGE OF DEFINITIONS

The third of the early triumvirate of lexicographers was Michael West; but whereas the innovations of Palmer and Hornby were designed for the user as writer, those of West were addressed to the user as reader. West was above all concerned with intelligibility, and for the New Method Dictionary (1935) he devised a restricted defining vocabulary (of 1490 words) for the purpose of explaining meanings. West's controlled vocabulary was to have an important influence on the second generation of LDs - those of the 1970s - as in an extended and modified form it was used in the first volume of LDOCE, not only for framing definitions but also for making up illustrative examples.

The chief advantage claimed for a controlled defining vocabulary (or CV) is that it facilitates understanding of unfamiliar words by defining them in terms of words which the dictionary user already knows. (This is not the same as saying, of course, that a CV necessarily provides a fuller or more precise understanding of those words.) How far then is the principal aim of the CV realized? Very little research has been carried out into the reactions of foreign students to the simplified definitions of LDOCE as compared with corresponding definitions in a non-controlled vocabulary. But in one investigation reported in RELC Journal, subjects who were asked to compare definitions in two LDs and one mother-tongue dictionary rated LDOCE highest for comprehensibility (MacFarquhar and Richards 1983). But this is scarcely surprising, and leaves other equally vital questions - such as those relating to completeness and precision of definition - uninvestigated. It may indeed be impossible to define some words adequately in terms of others of higher frequency. Satisfactory definitions of technical terms such as dahlia or copper, for instance, may only be possible by going outside the defining vocabulary altogether (Herbst, 1986).

Another pertinent set of questions comes to mind as soon as one begins to examine the suitability of a CV for inventing illustrative examples. Words which collocate regularly with particular dictionary entries are not in all cases high-frequency words. Consider, for instance, the verbs in investigate a crime and conduct an experiment. Now neither investigate nor conduct fell within the controlled vocabulary for LDOCE (first edition). For purposes of illustration, then, commit had to be specially marked and explained in the entry for crime, while conduct was omitted from the entry for experiment altogether (though, admittedly, perform and carry out were included). In the second edition of

LDOCE (1987) no artificial limits have been set to the words which can be used in examples, and the result is a much larger number of useful, because natural-sounding, collocations.

5 CURRENT DEVELOPMENTS

In a thought - provoking paper on ways in which the LD may develop in future to reflect our changing view of linguistic priorities and our growing perception of the learner's needs, Michael Rundell (1988) complains of the absence to date of any radical reshaping. The native-speaker dictionary, says Rundell, 'continues to exert a pervasive influence on MLDs (monolingual learners' dictionaries), determining their content, structure and general orientation to a very high degree (1988, 100). He may take comfort in two major changes that have occurred recently in the way semantic and grammatical information is presented to the user.

Editors are now departing in a number of well-signposted ways from the standard alphabetical method of presenting words and meanings. This policy can be seen at work in the continuing practice (is both LDOCE and OALD) of presenting commonly occurring networks (eg family relationships) and chains (eg military ranks) in illustrated tables, and in the now more widespread use, in LDs at various user levels, of usage notes. These are also of a much greater diversity than before, dealing with confusable items such as if/whether (recalling the tabular comparison of such pairs as entre/parmi in the Dictionnaire du Francais Contemporain), lexical fields (eg drip, leak, seep, run, ooze), and full-scale comparison of auxiliary and modal usage. Learner lexicography is now drawing dividends on the expansion in lexical field analysis and phraseology (not all of it computer-based) to which I referred earlier.

Another feature which cuts across the normal alphabetical run is of course pictorial illustration. Although many pictures in LDOCE (second edition) and OALD (fourth edition) deal with single objects, there is a tendency to group together pictorially objects, activities or people which, though related in form or function, nonetheless differ in some essential particular. Thus, group illustrations are called on to treat features of a lexical field that might otherwise require a lengthy usage note. An example is the picture (in OALD) of a wine bottle, a carafe and a decanter, which conveys similarities and differences of shape and use with great economy of means.

Another idea whose introduction is not altogether new, but whose working-out is now more deliberate and consistent, is the strategy of presenting a particular type of information - say about grammatical patterns - in more than one way at a given point, with the aim of reaching learners at different levels of language proficiency or reference skill. I can illustrate the point with reference to verb syntax in OALD. Patterns can be conveyed by codes (now generally mnemonic), by indications in italic or bold or co-occurring prepositions, and by examples:

> bother . . . (Tn, Tn. pr . . . } ~ sb (about/with sth) . . . Does my smoking bother you? Don't bother your father about it now.

If these are consistently ranged one above the other, as in this entry, the less experienced and less confident users of the dictionary will begin with the specific instances, but may eventually proceed to the more general statements.

The foreign learners' dictionary has been credited with some of the most significant advances in lexicography in recent years (Tomaszczyk, 1981), and the present volume testifies to its wide diffusion and value as a learning tool. In a period of momentous technological change it is vital not to lose contact with the sources of that strength in linguistic scholarship and in attentiveness to the learner's needs and capacities.

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THE BACKGROUND AND NATURE OF ELT LEARNERS' DICTIONARIES

Tom McArthur

1 INTRODUCTION

Unilingual dictionaries for the use of foreign learners are curious objects. It is not inherently obvious that a learner of a language needs a dictionary of that language entirely in that language. The case for first a bilingual dictionary then in due course the kind of dictionary available to the native speaker would seem to be overwhelming, yet the genre flourishes.

The foreign learner's dictionary was pioneered in and for English at the point when that language was becoming the lingua franca of the planet. Although there are unilingual learners' dictionaries for some other languages, English retains pride of place, and for much of this century it was the only language for which such books were compiled. In addition, the pioneering was confined to British English and remains largely a British concern. Worldwide commercial competition is almost entirely among four United Kingdom publishers: the Longman Group, Oxford University Press, Collins, and Chambers (to list them in the order in which they entered the fray).

The following paper has three aims: (1) to sketch in the sociohistorical background to such dictionaries, (2) to describe their salient features, and (3) to provide a basis for the discussion of both present and prospective works.

2 THE LEXICOGRAPHICAL BACKGROUND

Although learners' dictionaries are twentieth-century products, their pedigree stretches back to the Renaissance. At that time, the vernacular languages of Europe had begun to emerge from the shadow of Latin, the language of religion and scholarship. Where dictionaries had previously been part of the teaching of Latin as an international language, the genre now became available for the native speakers of such vernaculars as French and English, to help them understand their own languages. And where dictionaries had largely been unidirectional and bilingual (such as Latin explained through a mother tongue), they were now also unilingual works for home consumption.

The first dictionary of English, the Table Alphabeticall of 1604, compiled by the schoolmaster Robert Cawdrey, was also the first English learner's dictionary. It was a small book of 3,000 entries 'conteyning and teaching the true writing, and understanding of hard vsuall English wordes, borrowed from the Hebrew, Greeke, Latine, or French, &c. With the interpretation thereof by plaine English wordes, gathered for the benefit & helpe of Ladies, Gentlewomen, or any other unskilful persons.[1]'

The idea that 'hard usual' foreignisms could be explained by easy 'plain' words proved popular with the literate middle-classes, most of whom had little or no classical learning. The dictionaries of Robert Cawdrey, John Bullokar, Henry Cockeram, Thomas Blount, and Edward Phillips had become known as 'the hard-word dictionaries' and flourished for a century, slowly evolving into the more general and normative works of such eighteenth-century compilers as Nathaniel Bailey and Samuel Johnson, whose Dictionary of the English Language (1755) was a significant milestone in establishing the spelling of standard English and was compiled with foreign learners as well as native users in mind.[2]

Elocution was an important issue in 'polite society' and many compilers of dictionaries were as concerned with *orthoepy* (proper speech) as with orthography (proper writing). Thus, Thomas Dyche, in A Guide to the English Tongue (1709) and The Spelling Dictionary (1723) provided help with word stress by placing a mark after the stressed syllable of a polysyllabic word (as in di'nner and di'ocese). Johnson adopted this convention, which still survives in many general twentieth-century dictionaries, although in some general and all learners' dictionaries the mark is now placed before the stressed syllable. In the decades after Johnson, at least five pronouncing dictionaries appeared, the works of James Buchanan, William Kenrick, Thomas Sheridan, John Walker, and William Perry. Kenrick marked separate syllables with numbers which referred readers to a table of pronunciation, while Walker, in A Critical Pronouncing Dictionary of the English Language (1791), used superscript numbers indicating the 'powers' of the various written vowels. This method proved so popular that a number of books appeared which claimed to blend the definitions of Johnson with the pronunciations of Walker, but the superscripts died out in the mid-nineteenth century, probably because they were difficult to set as well as to read and use.

Compilers of these dictionaries were not only English (Kenrick and Walker) but Irish (Sheridan) and Scottish (Buchanan and Perry). In his preface, Walker lectured not only the Cockneys and other miscreants at home but also the Scots and Irish abroad for not measuring up to the standards of 'refined' London usage. His dictionary offered a metropolitan standard of both spelling and speech for both the native English and their more or less foreign neighbours within the British Isles. The works produced by the Irish and Scots conformed to this standard in grammar and vocabulary, but were marked by pronunciation values more typical of refined Dublin and Edinburgh than refined London.

Meanwhile, in the United States, Noah Webster rebelled against linguistic colonialism and published in 1828 his American Dictionary of the English Language, a powerful contribution to the establishment of a second national standard for the language. By and large, all such work catered as much to linguistic insecurity as to the disinterested spread of information. People felt that they needed unequivocal help in using the standard language, and these dictionaries sought to provide it, particularly for the orthography but also as far as possible for the orthoepy.

In the nineteenth century, increased literacy prompted the production in both the United Kingdom and the United States of dictionaries for the population at large. Works like Chamber's English Dictionary (1872), published in Edinburgh, were intended with a crusade-like zeal for everybody rather than for a social and educational elite. The Chambers brothers, William and Robert, actively promoted themselves as 'publishers for the people'. Such works were part of a drive for universal literacy; they were inexpensive, and therefore families and schools could afford to buy them in greater numbers than before. Along with their definitions, they provided help with pronunciation through a system of re-spelling, in which the values of vowels were given in a short list of words that served as touchstones. In Chambers, the values were those of middle-class Edinburgh. Such books stood in sharp contrast to the vast scholarly works being prepared 'on historical principles' in several languages, the most prominent of which was James Murray's New English Dictionary (now the Oxford English Dictionary).

Despite the enormous range of activity, however, publishers did not normally give thought to either ease of consultation or whether a user was not native to some kind of English. A dictionary was a dictionary, and that was that; at this stage, it was also a formidable array of conventions relating to layout, headword, pronunciation, grammatical label, definition, possible specimens of usage, possible pictorial illustration, punctuation, the arrangement of senses, and the presentation of derivatives, compounds, and idioms. By and large these conventions were taken as given, much as the division of the Bible into chapter and verse was taken as given. There were variations, but they were minor and occasional. By the end of the nineteenth century, it was implicitly established that to benefit from a dictionary one had to be thoroughly literate in its use, a state of affairs which has been carried over into contemporary ELT learners' dictionaries.

3 THE EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND

Around 1880, a radical new 'method' of language teaching and learning emerged in Europe, (and later the United States), whose pioneers wished to escape from what they saw as three negative aspects of language teaching:

(1) The weight of the classics, which persuaded many that modern languages were inferior to Latin and Greek.

(2) Literary and textual bias in the study of modern as well as ancient languages.

(3) The style of teaching now known as 'the grammar translation method', in which the structure of a language was learned through formal drill in established paradigms (such as the conjugations of regular and irregular verbs) followed by artificial sentences for translation and an exercise in composition, all formally corrected and often rewritten.

The radicals wished instead to offer courses in everyday spoken language, conducted in a direct and natural way, with a minimum dependence on texts and no translation at all. Wherever possible, the student should be immersed in the target language, so as to learn it by living it, and various new publications emerged extolling and embodying the new system as 'the Direct Method' or 'the Natural Method'. The radicals included Wilhelm Vietor in Germany, Paul Passy in France, Otto Jespersen in Denmark, Henry Sweet in England, and Maximilian Berlitz in the United States.[3]

By the beginning of the twentieth century, language teaching was in a ferment. The ELT learner's dictionary did not yet exist, but the matrix from which it would emerge included (1) an expansion of systems of education throughout the British Isles and Empire, (2) a growth in the publishing effort needed to sustain such an expansion, (3) a tradition of explaining harder words by easier words, often honoured in the breach, (4) a tradition of orthoepy as well as orthography, and (5) a shifting of attention away from classical formalism to a new concern for the spoken, the direct and the untranslated.

4 THE PHONETICIANS

The Phonetic Teachers' Association was founded in 1886 in France. Under the editorship of Paul Passy, a journal entitled the Fonetick Titcer was started in the same year, to popularize a special alphabet for the description and teaching of the sounds of English. The journal's contents were printed entirely in that new alphabet.

Membership of the Association became international and included most of the leaders of the reform movement. At the urging of Otto Jespersen, attention was also paid to the phonetic representation of languages other than English and the new phonetic alphabet was subjected to a process of development and modification which still continues. In 1897, the organization was renamed L'Association Phonetique Internationale (The International Phonetic Association).

The science of phonetics grew in tandem with the concern for new and more natural methods of language teaching and the development of the IPA. Many early phoneticians and members of the IPA were ardent spelling reformers and some, like Jespersen, were Esperantists. They were interested in language at large and in international communication, and were pedagogical innovators. But because of the centrality of print in Western civilization and the absence of good audio-technology, they continued to work with text rather than sound. Their advocacy of English spelling reform bore no fruit, but they made great progress with their system of phonetic symbols both for transcribing all human language and as a pedagogical alphabet to parallel the existing alphabet of English.

This pedagogical aid, however, increases the learning load for students (when they can be persuaded to adopt it). There are now not one but two sets of symbols to master on the way to acceptable written and spoken English. For Western Europeans this has not been a great burden, since the phonetic alphabet is a child of Roman alphabet, but for students who have learned to read and write in Arabic, Devanagari, Chinese, Japanese, etc., the burden is considerable.

Perfectionism and idealism were significant factors in the development of phonemic representation. It was thought that an inventory could be so organized as to recreate on paper the 'true' sounds of any language. The booklet The Principles of the International Phonetic Association (1967) notes: 'The original International Phonetic Alphabet of 1888 contained quite a number of the special letters used today, but it was imperfect in various respects. The Council has accordingly, since 1889, worked unremittingly to remedy defects... The result is that we now have a system which, though doubtless capable of still further improvement, is a very effective instrument for transcription on international lines, and one which can be used in "broad" and in "narrow" forms for the phonetic representation of all the principal languages of the world, and as a basis for orthographic reform for all languages needing it.'

5 DANIEL JONES AND RECEIVED PRONUNCIATION

From this background emerged in 1913 the Phonetic Dictionary of the English Language, by Daniel Jones. This pronunciation glossary was revised during the First World War as the English Pronouncing Dictionary (1917), which is one of the most influential ELT books ever published and has run to fourteen editions. Jones was a phonetician at the University of London and his work helped to establish that institution as a centre for the study of the phonetics of English. Both he and his successor, the late A C Gimson, were professors there.

The EPD is a dictionary only in the sense that it is alphabetically ordered. There are no definitions or other embellishments. It lists a selection of English words in traditional orthography, followed by one or more phonemic transcription in what Jones first called 'Public School Pronunciation' then in 1926 'Received Pronunciation', a variety of the educated speech of southern England whose heyday was the inter-war years. It evolved during the nineteenth century, more or less informally, in the major public (ie private) schools of England, in comparable schools established elsewhere in the British Isles and Empire, at the universities of Oxford and Cambridge, among the upper classes at large, and as the signature accent of the British Broadcasting Corporation, including the World Service. Despite its prestige, it has always been a minority British accent inspiring complex and often conflicting feelings throughout the United Kingdom, and foreign learners have seldom been aware of the social implications of actually achieving the model offered to them.

Because of its social and imperial standing, however, many people around the world have regarded RP as the only proper accent of English, either in general (a view which North Americans reject) or in British English (a view which some Britons endorse and others reject). However, many ELT practitioners have regarded it and continue to regard it as the only model which should be offered to foreign learners. Jones and Gimson, like the orthoepists of the eighteenth century, provided the accents of their own social and regional group as the universal norm. As a result, RP is the most described and transcribed accent in English and possibly in any language, and is the classical mode to which most British teachers and all British publishers are currently committed.

6 RESTRICTED VOCABULARIES

Jones and Gimson included in the EPD a wide range of the everyday words of the language together with proper names of various kinds. Susan Ramsaran's 1988 revision of the 14th edition contains 44,548 'ordinary words' and 15,116 proper names and abbreviations (59,664 in all). Examples of the proper names (from one page, chosen at ramdom) are Glenrothes, Glenwood, Glisson, Gloag, Gloria, Gloriana, Glos, Glossop, Gloster, Gloucester, Glubbdubbdrib, Gluck, Glyn, Glynde, Glyndebourne, Glynis, Glynne, and G-man. The selection of such words has been shaped by the wish to help with items like Gloucester, whose pronunciation and spelling are not a close match.

Where Jones was interested in pronunciation, a colleague at the University of London was interested in vocabulary and usage. This was Harold E Palmer, whose The Scientific Study and Teaching of Languages also came out in 1917. When Palmer went to Japan in 1922, to work for the Ministry of Education in Tokyo, he developed his approach, seeking to complement the natural and direct with, among other things, a system of graded word lists (conceived as concentric groups of words radiating from an essential core). He considered that, by learning the key words of English in stages from around 300 to around 3,000 the student could be saved from floundering in a mass of ill-digested information.

For Palmer, the circles of words could be judiciously ordered by means of an experienced teacher's 'vocabulary sense'. This view was shared by Michael West, a fellow Englishman working in Bengal, whose system of graded New Method Readers was developed by Longmans Green in the 1930s. The subjective and pedagogical view of vocabulary control espoused by Palmer and West was not, however, the only school of thought at the time. It flourished alongside the objective and statistical approach of such American word-counters as Edward L Thorndike. Through frequency counts based on a range of widely-used texts, Thorndike and his colleagues sought to establish the commonest words of English, usually organized in sets of thousands, from the first 1,000 most common to a point at which frequency of occurrence ceased to signify. In addition, C K Ogden in Britain created Basic English, an artificial language formed by limiting the grammar and vocabulary of the standard language according to principles of logical analysis. Ogden claimed that Basic, with its 850 core words and minimal grammar, had three functions: as an international lingua franca, a way into the standard language for foreign learners, and a cure for verbosity among users of English at large.

In the early 1930s, a feud developed between Ogden and West[4], who argued that Ogden had over-restricted Basic and created a crude and pernicious pidgin. Ogden as a result refused to attend the Carnegie Conference on vocabulary which took place in New York in 1934, leaving the field to the others. The New York meeting did not eliminate all the differences between the American objectivists and the British subjectivists, but considerable agreement led to the Carnegie Interim Report on Vocabulary Selection and Control, which served as the basis for Michael West's General Service List of English Words (Longman, 1953). The appearance of this list with its 'Semantic Frequencies and a Supplementary Word-List for the Writing of Popular Science and Technology' set the seal on forty years of pre-electronic word-listing which contributed the idea of a controlled defining vocabulary to the formula for the first proper learners' dictionaries.

7 THE FIRST WAVE

In 1935, there appeared the New Method English Dictionary, complied by West and J G Endicott (Longmans Green). The work was complementary to the New Method Readers, which were written within levels or circles of a given number of words, from early beginner to relatively advanced. In this book, 20-30,000 items were defined within a vocabulary of less than 1,500 words. Ogden's General Basic English Dictionary appeared in 1940, under the copyright of his

Orthological Institute. It used the 850 words of Basic to give 'more than 40,000 senses for over 20,000 words' and was intended for the young mother-tongue user as well as the foreign learner. The preface asserted that the Basic words were 'naturally the key words for Dictionary purposes'. This work went through some 24 unrevised impressions before the decision was taken in 1988 by the publishers Bell and Hyman (inheriting the title from Evans) to discontinue publication.

Meanwhile, in Japan, three of Palmer's colleagues - A S Hornby, E V Gatenby and H Wakefield - had been working on a dictionary of English for the more competent foreign learner, a work which would compactly combine lexical, idiomatic and syntactic information. Begun in 1937, the dictionary was completed in 1940, when Japan entered the Second World War. In 1942, the Japanese publisher Kaitakusha brought it out in Tokyo as the Idiomatic and Syntactic English Dictionary (for the Institute for Research in English Teaching, the organization for which Palmer had started work in 1922). At the end of hostilities, it was reprinted photographically by Oxford University Press and published in 1948 as A Learner's Dictionary of Current English, reprinting twelve times until a second edition in 1963 entitled The Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English. This had nineteen impressions until the third revision appeared in 1974 as the Oxford Advanced Leaner's Dictionary of Current English (50,000 headwords and derivatives claimed), by A S Hornby alone, with editorial assistance from A P Cowie and phonetic assistance from J Windsor Lewis.

By the 1960s, all the elements available by the end of the Second World War had become standard and ELT learners' dictionaries were firmly established. The leading publishers of the period, Oxford and Longman, brought out a variety of dictionaries for sub-groups of foreign learner, such as West's An International Reader's Dictionary and Hornby and E C Parnwell's An English Reader's Dictionary, establishing a staircase of such books from beginner through intermediate to advanced.

The new genre was marked by the alphabetic ordering of headwords, short compact entries, phonetic transcriptions, the identification of parts of speech, brief definitions for every identified sense, specimen phrases and sentences, and possible pictures. For the writing of definitions, either a strict 'defining vocabulary' was used, following West and Ogden, or a more ancient principle of easy words explaining hard words was strongly revived. For further pedagogical purposes, such syntactic and other information as the RP in IPA was the sole model of the spoken language, the transcriptions usually developed with the help of a phonetician in the Jones tradition. As time went on, the phoneticians and compilers were not necessarily themselves RP speakers, but proceeded as though they were, further idealizing a model to which they might or might not personally aspire.

8 THE SECOND WAVE

The publication of OALDCE in 1974 set the standard for the rest of the decade, but equally important was the Longman decision to challenge that standard. In the early 1970s, Charles McGregor laid the foundation for a massive extension of Longman reference titles, whose centrepiece would be the Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English (1978: over 55,000 entries claimed), edited by Paul Procter. Because they drew on a common inheritance from Jones, Palmer, West and Hornby, the OALDCE and LDOCE were close cousins, characterized by similar entry, page, and even cover designs. Although the books differed in detail, the overall effect was similar and they seemed set to advance indefinitely along the same line, each adapting to the other, much like rival mother-tongue dictionaries in the United Kingdom and the United States.

Foremost among the features they shared was a revised position on models of pronunciation. The RP model was now accompanied by a second-order 'General American' model. In an entry where phonetic discrimination was considered necessary, an unlabelled British transcription came first, then its labelled American equivalent (full or in part). However, wherever possible there was no American entry, on the uneasy principle that the RP transcriptions were often broad enough to serve both norms (and to favour economies in typesetting and space). Foremost among the differences were the use in LDOCE of a strict defining vocabulary of c. 2,000 words (descended from West's GSL), and a system of grammatical codes based on the research of Randolph Quirk et al.[5]

In 1978, the Oxford monopoly at the advanced level was over. Although no other publisher could hope to approach the market share of the giants, two contenders emerged, the Collins English Dictionary (1974: over 30,000 words and phrases claimed), edited by David J Carver, Michael J Wallace and John Cameron, and intended for the EFL market only, and the Chambers Universal Learner's Dictionary (1980: 54,000 'examples of modern English usage' claimed), edited by Elizabeth M Kirkpatrick, and intended for all learners of the language. Both titles were produced in Scotland, and differed from the English books in two respects:

(1) Whereas Oxford and Longman had pages crowded with technically complex entries, Collins and Chambers were simpler, more open, and avoided detailed and typographically complex coding.

(2) Whereas Oxford and Longman used specialized symbols in a narrow RP transcription, Collins kept to an older, broader, and simpler system and Chambers, advised by the phonetician David Abercrombie (a friend and colleague of Daniel Jones), adopted an 'extra-broad' transcription considered easier for students to read and representative of a wider range of speakers. With the major and minor differences among the various phonetic systems, the ELT field

in 1980 resembled the orthoepic and geographic diversity of British lexicography in 1780.

The 1970s also saw the development of highly specific dictionaries, for such areas as phrasal verbs and idioms. These were: the Collins Dictionary of English Phrasal Verbs and Their Idioms (1974), edited by Tom McArthur and Beryl T Atkins, the Oxford Dictionary of Current Idiomatic English, Vol 1: Verbs with Prepositions and Particles (1975), edited by Anthony P Cowie and Ronald Mackin, the Longman Dictionary of Phrasal Verbs (197), edited by Thomas H Long, and the Longman Dictionary of Current Idiomatic English, Vol 2: Phrase, Clause and Sentence Idioms, edited by A P Cowie, R Mackin and I R McGaig (1983). The fact that such specialized books could be produced and sold in addition to the increasingly detailed inclusion of such usages in the conventional works has been a remarkable testimony to the buoyancy of the ELT market and worldwide interest in the language.

In addition to other pioneering developments at Longman, LDOCE pioneered the use of the computer for lexicographic as well as typesetting purposes. ELT publishers were hesitant at the time to venture into such an area, and it is a mark of the swift evolution of hardware, software, idea, and emotions that, at the end of the 1980s, it would be unthinkable for any major work of reference in ELT or elsewhere to proceed without such an aid.

9 THE CONTEMPORARY SITUATION

One lexicographical adventure of the 1970s spilled over into the new decade. It owed little directly to the tradition of the learners' dictionary, and a lot to such works as Roget's Thesaurus, the Duden pictorial wordbooks, the research of John Lyons into structural semantics, and the work of the American cognitive anthropologists. It was an attempt to complement the alphabetic tradition with something thematic and closer to the everyday use of words. Such a conceptual wordbook was first mooted to Longman by David Crystal. Discussions gave rise to two years' lexical research (1972-4) by Tom McArthur, who then compiled the Longman Lexicon of Contemporary English (1981: over 15,000 defined words claimed).

Begun before LDOCE, the Lexicon was integrated into the Longman development plan as a sister volume. It seeks to cover the core words of the language in fourteen semantic fields, such as Life and Living things, People and the Family, and Space and Time. In turn, these fields divide into c. 130 subfields and hundreds of lexical sets (identified by field letter and set number) in which synonyms, antonyms, and other associated words are defined and illustrated together. Access to the sets is through both the list of fields at the beginning and an index of words and word senses at the back, the index doubling as an English-pronouncing dictionary. The Lexicon incorporates the defining vocabulary and grammatical codes of LDOCE and uses LDOCE definitions as a basis for many of its own definitions. Its aim was to display words in a more natural order than the alphabet and to help students discriminate their meanings and uses, both for general purposes and such specific tasks as writing in English.

The Longman Active Study Dictionary of English (1983: 38,000 words and phrases claimed), edited by Della Summers, is a cutdown of LDOCE with a simpler format and less complex grammatical codes. Where Longman and Oxford had produced workbooks to accompany their major dictionaries, a novel feature of LASDE was a concise workbook incorporated into the volume, as part of the guide to its use. Because British ELT dictionaries did not sell significantly in the American ESL market, the two major publishers decided to create special adaptations aimed at American teachers who perceived the originals as too British. The Americanized works appeared in 1983: (1) The Longman Dictionary of American English (38,000 words and phrases claimed), 'sponsoring editors' Arley Gray and Della Summers, a cutdown and adaptation of LDOCE with a close resemblance to LASDE (including a built-in workbook), and (2) the Oxford Student's Dictionary of AMERICAN English (over 20,000 words and phrases claimed), under the editorial name of Hornby and with the 'American editors' Dolores Harris and William A Stewart.

Both LASDE and the two US-oriented products have formats and styles closer in spirit to Collins and Chambers than to their originals. Both are major departures in terms of pronunciation models, their phonetic systems being exclusively American. With the publication of these books, the British publishers now offer the EFL/ESL world two asymmetrical pronunciation models: (1) a dual model for books published in the United Kingdom, in which RP is followed by GA, and (2) a single model for books published in the United States, with GA only. This development has received little attention and yet it represents a significant social, psychological, and linguistic shift. The publishers in question have decided that in the ESL market centred on the United States RP is irrelevant. At the same time, in the EFL/ESL market worldwide RP cannot stand alone. It must be followed by a GA with nearly equal billing. This suggests that the American model is becoming the primary model for English, i.e. the one for which adjustments must be made if books are to be sold.

For the publishers, the themes of the 1980s have been competition and revision. The policy of Oxford had been to 'update' the OALDCE in certain reprints, while working towards a fourth revision under the editorship of Anthony Cowie. In 1987, there was a double event, Longman bringing out a second edition of LDOCE (56,000 words and phrases claimed), edited by Della Summers, and Collins replacing CELD with the entirely new and much more ambitious Collins Cobuild English Language Dictionary (70,000 references claimed), edited by John Sinclair. Chambers has continued with the CULD while creating a joint Chambers/Cambridge imprint with Cambridge University Press. During the 1980s, Cambridge moved from medium to major ELT publisher, but without any ELT dictionaries, and has in part remedied that lack by adopting the CULD into its list.

LDOCE2 follows the direction taken by LASDE and its American cousin, in slimming down Procter's grammatical codes and simplifying the layout and conventions of the pages and entries. Cobuild has taken the idea of simplicity and user-friendliness further in the form of its definitions than any previous work. Instead of the traditional elliptical phrases, it uses whole sentences when describing words. Thus, for the first sense of the verb hunt, LDOCE2 has 'to chase in order to catch and kill (animals and birds), either for food or for sport', Cobuild has 'When people or animals hunt, they chase wild animals in order to kill them, either for food or as a form of sport'. Where Longman is compact and spartan, Collins is expansive and amiable, leading to a more expensive and larger product covering fewer items.

The Cobuild 'unique extra column' is also a shift towards simplicity and clarity, because it removes complex and often intimidating grammatical and semantic codes into the margin. However, in its phonetics, the work of the phonetician David Brazil, Cobuild reverses the trend towards simpler presentation and greater accessibility, providing a narrow notation for an RP described as 'a special type of Southern British English'. Included in this notation are (1) Walker-like superscript numbers for certain vowels and nasals (relating to the centralizing and reduction of certain full vowels and diphthongs), and (2) heavy type and underlining for vowels in stressed syllables. This is probably the most intricate system publicly offered to foreign learners in the 101 years since the IPA was formed. In addition, no American transcriptions are provided.

Where LDOCE2 emphasized its internationalism, Cobuild appears resolutely British in 'helping learners with real English'. Both publications stress the importance of the electronic citation corpora behind their entries and specimens of usage, the Collins claim of 'real English' resting upon the work of Cobuild itself: the COLLINS Birmingham University International Language Database. Unique in several ways, the Collins dictionary also stands alone in the existence of an academic work devoted entirely to describing how it came into existence[6]. This work implies that such a learner's dictionary is more than simply a product and a service; it is an area in which significant publishable linguistic research can be developed. This is obviously true, but it also points up the uneasy relationship throughout the tradition of the learners' dictionary between the interests of language academics (phoneticians, grammarians, and others) and those of teachers and students. It does not follow, for example, that a complex notation for the pronunciation, stress, and intonation of RP (however brilliant and accurate it may be) is the best service that may be provided in a learners' dictionary.

Envoi

The ELT dictionaries of the late twentieth century did not appear in a vacuum. Rather, as I have tried to show here, they have a long, complex, and very human history and have been operated on by a variety of social and academic forces. To provide an overview of this history, I have concentrated on the evolution of the main features of learners' dictionaries rather than the detail of any particular book or books, so as to provide as comprehensive a statement as possible. It seems likely that learners' dictionaries only make educational and economic sense if the language to be learned is international. It is certainly only in such a context that they have so far flourished.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. *For a general account of lexicography and the rise of the modern reference book, including the dictionaries of English, see Tom McArthur, Worlds of Reference: Lexicography, Learning and Language from the Clay Tablet to the Computer, Cambridge University Press, 1986.*
2. *Thus, in his preface, Johnson discussed what we now call phrasal verbs as a problem for foreigners and pointed out that he had taken pains to cover many of them in the dictionary.*
3. *(1) For a general account of the rise of the various language-teaching traditions and methodologies, see A P R Howatt, A History of English Language Teaching, Oxford University Press, 1984. He points out how the reform movement continues, 'direct' and 'natural' transmuted into 'communicative' and 'authentic'. (2) For an overview of the development of language-teaching methodologies, see Tom McArthur, A Foundation Course for Language Teachers, Cambridge University Press, 1983.*
4. *For a concise account of this war of the words, see Tom McArthur, 'The vocabulary-control movement in the English language', Indian Journal of Applied Linguistics, Vol. IV, 1978.*
5. *Randoplh Quirk, Sidney Greenbaum, Geoffrey Leech, and Jan Svartvik, A Grammar of Contemporary English, Longman, 1972.*
6. *J M Sinclair, editor, Looking Up: An account of the COBUILD Project in Lexical computing, Collins, 1987.*

PART II

TOWARDS ALTERNATIVE DICTIONARIES

Dictionaries and Language Learning
Paul Nation

Monolingual and Bilingual Dictionaries:
Fundamental Differences
Tadeusz Piotrowski

The Collocational Dictionary and
the Advanced Learner
Morton Benson

DICTIONARIES AND LANGUAGE LEARNING

Paul Nation

Dictionaries for language learning should make use of research on vocabulary and vocabulary learning to make it easier for learners to gain new vocabulary. The changes necessary to do this include indicating word frequency, providing useful etymological information and definitions which use this, giving the underlying concepts of words, and changing the format of dictionary entries.

The purpose of this article is to show that there is a difference between dictionaries for language learners and dictionaries for language learning, and to show that with only small changes it is possible to make a dictionary which makes learning a language easier.

LEARNERS' DICTIONARIES

Dictionaries for language learners typically take account of the level of proficiency of language learners and the difficulties they may experience through coming to learn a language while already being very proficient in their first language. Thus, such dictionaries usually provide definitions in controlled vocabulary, concentrate on the more frequent words of the language, and provide systematic information about pronunciation and grammar. They function as sources of useful accessible information about the language.

DICTIONARIES FOR LEARNING

Dictionaries for language learning should provide information about the language but they should also help learners to learn. Almost a century of research on vocabulary learning has provided very useful information about the nature of vocabulary and how it can be learned. Makers of dictionaries for learners of other languages should take account of this research and put it to use in the design of their dictionaries. If they do not, they are providing the learners with information but are withholding the means for learners to put that information to use.

The following sections of this paper will examine the findings of research on vocabulary and vocabulary learning and then suggest how these findings can be incorporated into dictionaries in order to make them truly dictionaries for language learning.

RESEARCH ON VOCABULARY

The research discussed in this section relates particularly to English but studies of other languages suggest that much of it, especially the statistical information on vocabulary frequency, applies to all natural languages.

Low frequency words. Numerous studies of vocabulary frequency indicate that by far the greatest number of words in a language occur very infrequently. Carroll, Davies and Richman's (1971) study of a 5,000,000 word corpus found that 40.4% of the 86,741 different words occurred only once. Repetition in context is clearly not going to be the means by which such words are learned. Other help is needed.

High frequency words. In addition, frequency studies show that a relatively small number of words, certainly 5,000 or less, occur quite often. Because they occur quite often they account for a very large proportion of the words in any spoken or written text. To take the most extreme example, if you learn the word the then you know 7% of the words in a text, because the occurs around seven times in every 100 words of text. If you learn this word then clearly you are going to get a good repayment for your learning effort. This is not limited to words like the however. Among the most frequent 5,000 words of English are words like ornament, statement, congratulate, moral, substance, and external. All these examples are taken from the Cambridge English Lexicon by Hindmarsh (1980). Although these words by no means occur as frequently as the in the ordinary use of English, the chances of meeting them again after having learnt them are high. That is, the benefit in opportunity to use the word when compared with the cost of learning the word is much greater than the cost-benefit of learning less common words. Swenson and West (1934 p.8) expressed it in this way "Effort must be expressed in terms of the accomplishment aimed at." If learners knew which words gave the greatest benefit for the cost of learning, they could then be efficient in their vocabulary learning.

Word parts. Frequency studies of word building in English (Roberts, 1965) show that approximately 66% of the words not in the most frequent 2,000 words of English come from French, Latin or Greek. This means that large numbers of English words can be broken into parts such as prefix, stem, or suffix. Here are all the French, Latin and Greek derived words from a 93 word paragraph chosen at random from an ESP journal: contrast, telephone, conversation, expected, identify (3x), supplied, system, prologue (2x), information, customize, particular, recipients, discussion. It is not difficult to see that for most of these words, knowing the meaning of the parts of the words would (1) make it easier to remember the meanings of the words and (2) give access to a much larger group of words. For example, knowing that con means "together" will help in learning the meaning of contrast "put two or more things together to see their differences". In addition there are many words that use the prefix con- meaning with or together. Studies by Stauffer (1942) and Bock (1948) show that a very small number of prefixes occur in a very large number of words. It would thus be necessary to learn only a few prefixes, about 20, in order to have a great help in learning many, many words. Learners of course would need help in seeing which words could be broken into parts and what these parts mean.

RESEARCH ON VOCABULARY LEARNING

This section looks at research on how learners can be helped to memorize new vocabulary. It looks at research on the keyword technique and words in sentence contexts, and it discusses the unresearched area of the effect of learning the underlying concepts of words.

Keyword. The keyword technique is one of the most thoroughly researched areas of vocabulary learning. Reviews of research in 1981 (Paivio and Desrochers) and 1982 (Pressley, Levin and Delaney) included almost fifty studies and there have been many more since then. In almost every study the keyword technique has been shown to be far superior to any other rote method of vocabulary learning. The keyword technique involves these steps.

1. Think of a word you already know from your first language or the second language which sounds like all or the first part of the word you want to learn.

For example, if you want to learn node then think of a first language word or a known English word that sounds like node or the beginning of node: let us choose know. This word, know, is your keyword.

2. Then think of an image combining the meaning of the new word and the meaning of the keyword. For example, node means "a place where branches or parts of a system or network meet or join" so the image could be a face with a knowing smile drawn on the node of a plant.

In order to use the keyword technique learners need to be able to think of keywords and think of a useful image. Using word parts is a very sophisticated use of the keyword technique. In this case, the keyword is the prefix or perhaps the stem. The image is not something manufactured but is in fact the true etymological connection between the meaning of the word part and the meaning of the word. For example, the keyword for exhume would be ex (meaning "out, away") and the connection between the meaning of the word exhume and the keyword ex- is the etymological connection - "take a body out of the ground". In order to use this most important application of the keyword technique it is necessary to know (1) the new word contains parts, (2) the meaning of the parts, (3) the way the meaning of the parts relates to the meaning of the whole word.

Contexts. Most research on learning vocabulary in sentence contexts has been done with native speakers of English learning English words. Gipe (1979) and Crist (1981) found that learning words in sentence contexts gave superior results over learning from definitions. This was particularly true if the learning was tested using sentence contexts, which is somewhat like the use learners will have to make of learned vocabulary. Crist concluded "acquiring word meaning through contexts results in a greater degree of generalization to new contexts than would obtain if subjects encountered an unfamiliar context after exposure to definitions" (p. 276). Clearly, there are advantages in having sentence contexts which encourage learners to make inferences.

Underlying concept. Dictionaries tend to increase the number of entries or meanings for words rather than decrease them. For example, different entries are made for different parts of speech of a word. Different uses are carefully distinguished such as for the word name, to give a name to something, to say someone's name, and to name a successor. This has the effect of increasing the number of items to be learned. If the distinctions also correspond to different first language words, the problem is made worse. To make the learners' job easier, a dictionary should try to reduce the number of learning items so that the learners have less to learn. This can be done by providing definitions which cover as many different uses of a word as possible. For example, name could be defined as "(make use of) the word(s) that someone or something is known by, in order to..." with the various distinctions used as examples or applications of the general definition.

Let us now apply these research findings to the design of dictionaries.

DESIGNING DICTIONARIES FOR LEARNING

If dictionaries are based on the findings of research on vocabulary and vocabulary learning, they should contain the following information.

Information about the usefulness of words. The dictionary should contain some indication of word frequency. This could be done by using numbers (as in the Cambridge English Lexicon) for the high frequency words of English, perhaps the most frequent 5,000 or so words and having no indication for the remaining low frequency words. Any word with a number would be worth making an effort to learn. Other words could be left to the learners' discretion. This would be a very small change to about one-quarter or less of the words in a dictionary.

Contexts for the words. Wherever possible the dictionary should provide sentence contexts for words in order to enrich the chances of learning. Most learners' dictionaries already do this. It would be advantageous if these sentences preceded the definition to encourage guessing from context.

Helpful etymology. Where it is helpful, the dictionary should include simple etymological information. Such information is helpful where the meanings of the word parts can be related to the meaning of the word. Thus, providing etymological information for despicable is useful. But providing it for destine is not useful as it is difficult to see how the meanings of the parts relate to the present meaning of the whole word. A useful addition to this kind of information is an indication of related words. So the entry for rank should indicate its relationship to arrange. This type of information allows learners to connect previous learning to the learning of the new items. Some dictionaries, but not learners' dictionaries, already provide some information of this kind, but it needs to be presented more accessibly, with learning in mind rather than etymological accuracy. This would result in only a small addition to learners' dictionaries.

Definitions that relate to word parts. The definitions given should be worded so that they contain the meaning of the parts of the word. Depreciate for example in the Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English (1987) is defined "to fall in value". A slight change in this definition to "to go down in value" includes "down", the meaning of the prefix de-. This type of change does not change the size of the entry for this item.

Keywords. Each dictionary entry could suggest a keyword for that item. This would encourage the use of this very effective mnemonic technique. Research on the keyword technique, however, has shown that, at least for some learners, it is better if they find their own keywords, thus I do not feel very strongly about the inclusion of this information. Its inclusion however would have a positive effect on learning, even if only in encouraging the use of the technique rather than helping learners with each word. It would result in only a one word addition to each entry for words that did not have etymological information.

Underlying concepts. Definitions should cover as many uses of the word as possible, treating different uses as examples of the underlying concept rather than as separate meanings. This would have the added benefits of encouraging learners to be flexible in their interpretation of words in context and would encourage the development of concepts that are not poor translations of first language concepts. This change to dictionaries would not require extra space. In conjunction with definitions that relate to word parts, it may result in some slightly awkward definitions, but when this is weighed against the considerable help it would give to learning, such awkwardness is readily acceptable. If definitions were given in sentence form as in the COBUILD dictionary, then there will probably be no awkwardness at all. Listing related forms of the word will also help learners generalize from the entry.

The format of entries. The format of each entry should help learning. For example, the definitions might come after the examples to encourage guessing from context. The etymology would be pointed out before the definition is given. Possible formats should be researched using introspection techniques, getting learner reaction, checking the skills needed to use the dictionary, and considering adaptability to computer use. This is what an entry adapted from the Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English (1987) might look like.

ex.pand /ik'spænd/ v [UWL] (ex- out, -pand spread) Water expands when it freezes. | The company has expanded its operations in Scotland by building a new factory there. | the rapidly expanding market for computers | I don't quite follow your reasoning. Can you expand (on it)? | You'll have to expand your argument if you want to convince me. |

> When you expand something or when something expands, it spreads out to become bigger by growing in size or number, or by adding more detail.
> **expandable, expanse, expansion, expansive**

[UWL] is a frequency indicator. It signals that the word is in the University Word List (Xue and Nation, 1984) and is therefore a very useful word for learners going on to upper secondary or tertiary study.

Computer use The dictionary should be available in both book form and on computer disc. This would allow the dictionary to be used in many ways with other computer materials. For example, learners could call up the dictionary examples of a word they meet while reading to help them guess from context. If the dictionary was on a disc, it would allow reordering of the dictionary or selection from it according to frequency level, word parts, grammatical pattern and collocations. The dictionary could thus be a useful basis for making learning materials or tests.

The computer version of the dictionary could gradually reveal information so that an entry could be used as an exercise. Here are some examples.

(i) The example sentences are shown and the learner has to decide what grammatical pattern the word fits into. Then the answer is provided.

(ii) The example sentences are shown and the learner tries to guess the meaning. Then the definition or a choice of four definitions is provided (three taken from other words in the dictionary).

CONCLUSION

The aim of this article has been to suggest that we need to change the purpose for which dictionaries are prepared. They should no longer just be sources of information, and research shows that they are not well-used sources (Newbach and Cohen, in press), but should be a learning resource with learning considerations systematically taken into account. As we have seen, this does not require enormous changes to existing learners' dictionaries. If these small changes are made then dictionaries, instead of being useful adjuncts to a course, can become core texts.

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MONOLINGUAL AND BILINGUAL DICTIONARIES: FUNDAMENTAL DIFFERENCES

Tadeusz Piotrowski

The controversy over the function of the bilingual dictionary in foreign language learning and use is still raging. When we look at the recent opinions from such eminent linguists as Quirk (1987) or Sinclair (1987a) we have to conclude that, indeed, the sooner the learners stop using their bilingual dictionaries the better for them, because the bilingual dictionary "ties us down to a perpetual exercise in translation, inhibits us from free creative expression in the foreign language we are now mastering..." (Quirk, 1987). No wonder then that teachers have been advised to wean their students from using bilingual dictionaries for some time: from Ščerba (1936/1983) to Hausmann (1977: 145-149).

These are opinions yet, and we have to ask: what are they based on? What are the facts about dictionaries that lead to such opinions? Or perhaps these views are based only on some assumptions about language, language acquisition and language use.

This paper is an attempt to discuss such opinions on the background of facts about dictionary use. Then the differences between monolingual and bilingual dictionaries will be examined in greater detail. The focus will be on the most fundamental differences. It seems that both bilingual and monolingual dictionaries can be better used, and perhaps improved, if the nature of information provided by various kinds of dictionaries is understood better.

Our discussion will start with an argument from the history of dictionary use. Simply, EFL monolingual dictionaries are, on the whole, a relatively recent development. In classroom conditions people have been learning foreign languages for millennia with the help of the bilingual dictionary. Outside the classroom languages were of course learned in a natural way and no dictionaries were needed. Indeed, most often bilingual dictionaries are the norm, the most natural kind of dictionary (cf Hartmann 1983). Monolingual dictionaries seem to be indispensable within the framework of all "direct" methodologies, which equate foreign language acquisition with thinking in the foreign language.

Not surprisingly such methodologies usually seek some support from psycholinguistic research. Yet when we look closer at this research, as Béjoint did (Bejoint, 1988), we find it rather inconclusive: there is little agreement on what it means to be a bilingual speaker. At present it is not quite possible to offer arguments for or against mono- or bilingual dictionaries on the basis of psycholinguistics.

We do not know what goes on in the learner's mind. Yet perhaps we can see at least what influence various dictionaries can have on the proficiency of the learners. At first sight the opinions seem to be also contradictory. Thus, according to one author, prolonged use of bilingual dictionaries may probably lead to retardation of second-language proficiency (Baxter, 1980). On the other hand, in a large-scale study of factors influencing formation of linguistic and communicative competence in Polish students of English it was found that ownership only of a bilingual dictionary is related in a statistically significant way to a better linguistic competence (as contrasted with communicative competence). In fact, the correlation was quite strong (Komorowska 1978: 187-192). The influence of monolingual dictionaries was not studied: at that time they were not very popular in Poland. Finally, an astonishing fact has been reported from Israel: use of bilingual dictionaries has no effect on reading comprehension (Bensoussan, Sim, Weise 1984). It is not very difficult to explain the fact: it was communicative competence that was studied in the Israeli experiment, and the Polish study has shown that this sort of competence is not influenced by bilingual dictionaries. Therefore we seem to have one fact to deal with: bilingual dictionaries are useful in acquisition of linguistic competence.

Other studies of dictionary use provide quite useful information on the habits and preferences of the learners. The most important finding is that no matter what their level of competence foreign learners and users use their bilingual dictionaries as long as they use dictionaries at all. Advanced students use monolingual dictionaries together with bilingual ones. Evidently bilingual dictionaries satisfy some needs which monolinguals do not serve very well (cf. Béjoint, 1981; Hartmann, 1983; Tomaszczyk, 1979). Another result worth noting is that the users tend to view bilingual dictionaries more critically than monolingual ones (Tomaszczyk, 1979). Thus, they are more likely to check information provided by bilingual dictionaries in other sources, for example in monolingual dictionaries. In this way they use some sort of monitor to check their own output. It is unlikely that they will do so when consulting a monolingual dictionary.

These are the facts, and in the following discussion we will try to provide some sort of explanation. The explanation will be given indirectly, in a discussion of the main arguments against the bilingual dictionary. It is hoped that in the discussion some sort of picture will gradually emerge of what a bilingual dictionary actually contains and how it works. Monolingual dictionaries will be discussed parallely. Only one aspect will be taken into consideration but one that seems to be most important for the users, as all studies confirm (eg Béjoint, 1981; Hartmann, 1983; Tomaszczyk, 1979): meaning. It is meaning of lexical items that a dictionary is most often used to explain.

Obviously no definition of meaning will be offered here. Yet there seem to exist two distinct approaches to the study of meaning. Thus, on the one hand meaning can be seen as a sort of entity: concept, notion, prototype, stereotype, or fact of culture. On the other hand, meaning can be seen as a sort of activity: skill, knowledge of how to use a word. Both approaches have been put to work in EFL lexicography and from both come arguments against the bilingual dictionary.

As to the former approach, still the best discussion of the differences between the monolingual and the bilingual dictionary can be found in Ščerba's writings (Ščerba 1940/1974: 297-303). Thus, the bilingual dictionary can never be adequate in description of meaning-entities because the entities are language-specific and L2 equivalents will be related to different entities than L1 items (cf Ščerba's masterly analysis of Russian *Igla* and German *Nadel*). This is, of course, ture. L2 equivalents show only a part of the meaning of an L1 item. There are no true "equations" between L1 and L2 items, even in such seemingly simple cases as names of animals (and with other concrete nouns): English *dog* is only in a part of its meaning "the same" as French *chien*, German *Hund*, or Polish *pies*. Thus it is not possible to translate *Mary patted the dog and she wagged her tail* using any of the equivalents given, if the reference to sex is to be retained. English *dog* and the equivalents listed here are only partly equivalent in denotation.

The question, however, arises: do monolingual dictionaries, and EFL dictionaries in particular, describe the entities - prototypes well? Do they describe prototypes at all? And what is the relation between the definition and meaning? Lexicographers do seem to think that their dictionaries describe prototypes (eg Summers, 1988). But what actually EFL dictionaries offer is often a random selection of semantic features relating - perhaps - to prototypes. EFL dictionaries are not very successful even in the relatively well-researched area of natural-kind words (Piotrowski, 1988; Piotrowski, 1989, the latter paper is my criticism of EFL lexicography and I have to refer the reader to it for details and examples relating to what follows).

Dictionary definitions provide very incomplete descriptions of meaning, and lexicographers actually rely on as assumption that the users will reconstruct the rest of the meaning of a word on their own. This assumption is justified in case of native speakers but also foreign learners are expected to know quite a lot about foreign culture. It is assumed that their categorization of the world would be roughly the same as that of the lexicographers. For European users this assumption is perhaps valid but what about other users?

Finally, we have to look at the relation of definitions to meaning. Simply, definitions are not meaning, they are about meaning, and, with other elements about language, they belong to lexicographic metalanguage. Any dictionary thus contains at least two levels: language and metalanguage. This has to be emphasized: definitions are on a different level of language than items being explained. They are on another level of abstraction. It is interesting that monolingual dictionaries traditionally indicated this fact. Definitions were not written in normal

English and signalled at once their different status. In EFL dictionaries from the Hornby to the Longman dictionary there was a clear tendency to use in definitions a more or less precisely defined sublanguage (a part of English) which did not follow in all respects the rules of normal English (see Hanks, 1987; Rundall, 1988). CCELD goes against this trend in using normal English. This may cause some confusion about the status of metalanguage. For example, the if - clause is both English and meta-English and the user has to be made aware of the fact. On the other hand, their definitions are not substitutable. There are important implications of the fact that metalanguage is another level of abstraction, because the relation between language and metalanguage is roughly similar to that between two different natural languages. Thus, explanations (definitions) will never contain the same amount of meaning as the words being explained. From this it follows that the classical "substitutable" definition is a fiction: it is substitutable in a limited number of contexts only. It is worth noting, then, that EFL lexicography has problems quite similar to those of bilingual lexicography. It has to be stressed that both monolingual and bilingual dictionaries distort the meaning of L1 items.

We have to ask however in what way descriptions of prototypes may be useful to foreign learners. They can certainly be very useful in better understanding of foreign words and foreign culture but is better understanding helpful in appropriate use of words in relevant contexts? The prototype approach is certainly excellent for comprehension skills yet it seems that for text production more explicit information on how to use a word might be more convenient for the user. A dictionary then would have to be based on an operational concept of meaning, and the description of meaning of a lexical item would take the form of a statement describing how that item is used in appropriate social and linguistic contexts. The operational concept of meaning is the basis for most of the entries in CCELD, a dictionary that is specifically oriented to text production. CCELD presents more explicit information on collocability patterns of English words. Comparing CCELD with bilingual dictionaries, its editor says that "bilingual dictionaries can be made ridiculous if they are used to generate translations" (Sinclair, 1987: 106). This is true, and results from the nature of linguistic comparison in bilingual dictionaries: there are rarely any "general" equivalents. Strictly speaking, any L2 expression can have as many L1 equivalent expressions as there are various situations of use. To produce an all-embracing bilingual dictionary one would have to check all possible combinations of linguistic signs in all possible situations of use for equivalents. This is obviously not possible.

However, this is also a problem for EFL lexicographers: their description of English collocations is based on criteria of transparency and extendability. Ultimately these criteria are based on meaning. Transparent combinations can be formed by adding a word to a word on the basis of their dictionary description, and, because of this, they are not included in EFL dictionaries. Dictionary descriptions of collocations are assumed to be extendable, ie various words can be treated as indicators of whole groups of words related semantically. The chief problem is that both of the principles work perfectly well for native speakers of English, not for foreign learners. For learners any combination of lexical items can be opaque, or, on the other hand, natural because extendability of collocational patterns is not very much predictable.

Let us discuss an example that will show most of the problems that have been mentioned. This example will also raise problems to be dealt with at a later point. Let us say that a user wants to produce an idiomatic English collocation meaning 'fruit that is already not quite good for eating'. Consulting the Longman Lexicon the user will find the following: E 108 stale, mouldy E 111 rotten, rancid, rank. Rotten could be used but it is too strong (the apple is not yet that bad). It is interesting that the Lexicon will not help in finding the most versatile word: bad. The entry on bad does have an example The apple is bad but the entry is in Section F: Feelings, Emotions, Attitudes and Sensations, and I cannot see any reason why anyone should look it up for a word relating to fruit. This is because the Lexicon has the same drawbacks as any thesaurus: semantic relatedness of words in particular entries can vary enormously and be either very narrow or very broad. Rotten, however, is a blind alley: EFL dictionaries do not give suitable synonyms at its entry. A cue can be found in the definitions, which do use the word bad, but the definitions cannot be relied on. The entries on fruit are disappointing, too. Nor can the BBI help at the entry fruit. So, it is time to turn to a bilingual dictionary ...

Perhaps the user has found some suitable words in the bilingual dictionary. If the dictionary is small and not quite good all that will be offered will be series of synonyms without explanations which the user has to look up in EFL dictionaries. In this connection it has to be mentioned that the user will find EFL dictionaries helpful only if the answer to a very important question is known: is fruit considered to be a food in English? Languages differ enormously in their categorization of the world. In Polish, for example, potatoes are not regarded as vegetables, they are a separate category. In fact, the word food is not mentioned at all in the definitions of fruit in EFL dictionaries. The user's suspicions will be confirmed by the Lexicon: fruits are not included in the section Food.

Let us say that the bilingual dictionary has the words: bad, off, high, stale. If the user decides that fruit is food in English, then, on the basis of definitions , all these words seem suitable. For example:

Stale	LDOCE	1 no longer fresh, no longer good to eat, smell, etc. (in example: bread)
	CCELD	1 Food ... that is stale is old and no longer fresh (in example: bread)

The definitions are under-restrictive, the examples, on the other hand, are over-restrictive. As a result, both dictionaries can be more useful in comprehension rather than in production. A good bilingual dictionary will indicate the range of frequent collocates, for example *CRFD*: *stale* ... *meat*, *eggs*, *milk* ... *cheese* ... *bread* ... *beer* ... This problem results from the fact that monolingual dictionaries contain generalized explanations of meaning. Bilingual dictionaries have to include only examples of actual usage, together with their equivalents. Otherwise they are useless (of course, quite a number of bilingual dictionaries *are* rather useless).

A good bilingual dictionary will also help the learner to find quickly the necessary expression. Thus, *CRFD* has: *se gâter* ... [*viande*] to go bad, go off ... /*fruit*/ to go bad. Unfortunately, the adjectival forms, ie *gâte* in this case, are not always included in this dictionary and the student might actually produce ^{x}*off meat* by analogy.

Both bilingual and monolingual dictionaries thus seem to have similar problems when used in text production. EFL dictionaries have one more important problem. This relates again to the language of description. The fact that EFL dictionaries use L2 in explaining L2 vocabulary has been always praised - the learner sees L2 actively work at explaining something. Can any dictionary yet succeed in describing its vocabulary by using the same vocabulary? EFL dictionaries suffer from certain drawbacks by trying to do so. One is circularity of definitions: one definition uses a synonymous expression (ie defines by synonyms) which, when looked up, is explained by the first one. This is a frustrating experience, which rarely happens with bilingual dictionaries. It has also to be asked: is the English used in definitions really a model for learners to follow? We have already noted that definitions often do not follow the rules of normal English. Here are two examples from *LDOCE*: *laugh* 1 ... 2 ... to bring, put, etc, with laughing ... 3 ... to cause (oneself) to become by laughing ... Such definitions are rather hard to comprehend (for details and examples see Piotrowski 1989). *CCELD* tries to break this tradition, which is admittedly difficult, and its explanations are not without some problems. First, the explanations are rather verbose and occasionally use vague jargon, eg *walk of life* ... the position that you have in society in terms of the kind of job you have. Second - is its English so natural?

crow ... 3 ... a cock utters a loud sound ...
roar ... 4 ... a lion utters a loud noise ...

According to *CCELD*, the most natural collocation of *utter* is with human subjects:

utter ... 1 When you *utter* sounds or words ...

Now, having cleared the ground, we are ready to make some generalizations about EFL and bilingual dictionaries. Most of the problems of EFL dictionaries (and of monolingual dictionaries in general) seem to reside in two areas. First, EFL dictionaries attempt to describe meaning of lexical units. Secondly, in their descriptions they use words forming a system. In the system words refer to other words first of all and lead outside only as far as their meaning and applicability is known.

The fact that lexicographers have to describe meaning has been usually seen as an advantage rather than a disadvantage. Yet, as we have seen, for practical purposes it is very difficult to describe meaning concisely and with a sufficient degree of precision. Monolingual lexicography is inherently circular: the user has to know the meaning of L2 items and foreign culture in order to understand definitions. In short, the user has to be a native speaker. EFL dictionaries try to avoid this inherent circularity by: - using a sublanguage (see above), - using the most frequent words of English, which are, however, the most difficult words to master for the learner (see Piotrowski 1989). In contrast, bilingual dictionaries do not describe meaning at all (except in certain well-known cases, eg culture-specific words). This significant fact is overlooked most often; the bilingual dictionaries are said to have "definitions" or "translations". Instead, they include pointers, references, ie equivalents, to some third objects, which are outside both L1 and L2. The third objects are not meanings - these are language-specific - but rather conditions of applicability of L2 and L1 items (see Lyons, 1977: 7.4, 8.1)

Another important point is that meaning in EFL dictionaries is described by a number of discrete components. The components include part-of-speech, usage, field labels and any other meaningful linguistic bits (words, syntax, etc). Meaning is described, then, in an analytical way, and the users have to synthesize the various bits into a meaningful whole: a lexical unit. It certainly is not easy and depends on the abilities, intelligence, and overall linguistic competence of the users. Perhaps the analytical nature of explanation helps implant the item in the learner's mind (Johnson-Laird referred to by Summers, 1988: 116) but the considerable effort is not always worth-while. Moreover, the resulting knowledge of the item is cold, conscious.

Bilingual dictionaries work in a quite different way. They point to meaning (via applicability) in a synthetic way: a well-chosen equivalent transmits the part of meaning it has in common with the L2 item all at one time, by the powerful mechanism of analogy. There is little effort on the part of the user. It is very important also that the bilingual dictionary provides "hot" knowledge, it conveys some sort of "feel" of the foreign word. The best example to discuss this would be extreme cases: taboo words. Warnings are not adequate because they cannot produce the effect these words have on the users. Thus,

shit^{2} n taboo^{1} [U] solid waste from the bowels: EXCREMENT (LDOCE) contains only foreign words, while in

shit *French* merde, *German* Scheisse, *Czech* hovno, etc,

we have both words *and* the attitudes, emotions, etc. Only good equivalents can show the users what reaction such words can produce. This, however, holds good for most words in bilingual dictionaries: bilingual dictionaries are more vivid than monolingual ones.

We have noticed that EFL dictionaries are circular. Circularity is certainly a disadvantage but, on the other hand, it is an inevitable result of a very positive quality - the fact that EFL dictionaries attempt to describe the linguistic system of English. In language words refer to other words first of all. Quite rightly EFL dictionaries have been praised for their attempt (on the other hand, praises usually related to descriptions of grammar, not of meaning). Yet it is in the nature of systems that they are self-contained and consequently impenetrable. What is needed is points of access to the system. Moreover, the system has to be put to work, ie it has to be used about the external world, it has to communicate something. In fact both requirements come to the same, as we shall see.

What could be the points of entry to the system of English in monolingual dictionaries? Simply the relevant word has first to be known, only then can some information about it be obtained. If the word is not known, then the dictionary is useless. Some roundabout way can be used, as, for instance, looking up known words in order to go on to unknown ones but this would be both time-consuming and rather unreliable, as we have seen with *rotten* above. The bilingual dictionary has the best solution - the L1-L2 list, which provides the quickest way of access to the system. It has to be stressed that this is only access to the system, not wholly reliable information about the system. It might be argued that a dictionary grouping words according to semantic concepts, or functions, would be superior to the bilingual dictionary (eg the *Longman Lexicon*). This is not quite true: the arrangement of concepts and functions is usually very subjective, so that an index has to be added, and we return to the problems of alphabetic dictionaries. Moreover, as we have noticed, this sort of arrangement has its problems.

From another point of view, points of access to the system could mean those entries that lead us further into the system, those that provide the greatest amount of information about the system. EFL dictionaries follow quite traditional solutions in this respect. Namely, in traditional grammar-oriented approaches to foreign language teaching the verb has the central position, because the verb phrase is the most important element in the sentence. Consequently, verb entries (and entries on words that are verb-like, ie relational, like adjectives, prepositions) contain most information about some vital aspect of the system.

The system has, as is well known, two dimensions: paradigmatic and syntagmatic. It is interesting that noun entries in EFL dictionaries contain usually only paradigmatic information (synonyms, opposites, etc). It is entries on verbs, etc that contain most information about the syntmagatic dimension. Using CCELD it is very easy to write good English sentences on the basis of verb entries, or to write good noun phrases on the basis of adjective entries. Actually adjectives would make a good example, because typically the noun is both the semantic and syntactic centre in the noun phrase, so it seems somehow perverse to provide systemic information on an element of secondary importance. However, the same is the case with the verb. Even though it is the syntactic centre of the sentence, the semantic centre is the noun (or, rather, the noun phrase). It has to be stressed that nouns are particularly important in English, where there is a pronounced tendency to use a delexicalized verb and a noun rather than a full verb. Thus, he had a drink is preferred to he drank something. An English sentence is often a series of heavy noun phrases linked by rather insignificant verbs. The verb is also semantically very unstable: in any paraphrase verbs can be quite freely exchanged for other verbs. EFL dictionaries thus describe the system by focusing on words essential for the internal working (as manifested in the paraphrasing potential of the system) of the system. Their basis of description is relational words. Is this solution helpful for text production? Before we answer the question let us look at bilingual dictionaries.

What is the basis of description in the bilingual dictionary? Which items, then, can be most easily described in a bilingual dictionary? The answer is simple: concrete nouns. In contrast, the most difficult words to describe in a monolingual dictionary are concrete nouns. In fact other words can be described in a bilingual dictionary on the basis of their collocability with nouns. Thus, bilingual lexicographers do not ask: what is the Polish, French, etc equivalent of heavy in the sense 'great' but they look at the collocations of heavy:

heavy rain, storm 'silny deszcz, burza'
but: heavy snow 'gęsty śnieg'

A Pole would find the entries on heavy in CCELD and LDOCE inexplicit, though he would find heavy snow at snow in LDOCE.

In fact, we have already commented on the problem how to make the system work because we have shown that the system has as if two layers: one layer is made up of words that relate to the external world, the other is composed of words that help to make a structure of other words. By the same token, we have arrived at the distinction between first-order, second-order, and third-order words (Lyons, 1977: 438-452). First-order words are those that make the first layer (concrete words and names of persons), the second layer has second-order and third-order words. Accordingly, the bilingual dictionary is based on first-order words, while the monolingual dictionary is based on second-order and third-order words. First-order words are, in fact, semantic centres in texts. This can be seen very clearly when we try to produce a paraphrase because they are words that have to be retained unchanged. Any learner also knows that it is possible to communicate in speech by use of nouns only. The system then that binds the nouns is extra-linguistic behaviour. Finally, any text production, is, in fact, a continuous paraphrase. Therefore it does not seem that EFL dictionaries are very useful in text production because points of access to the system should be, it appears, noun entries, which serve as keywords in texts (abstract nouns, though easy to paraphrase, seem to be more important semantically than verbs by virtue of analogy with concrete nouns). LDOCE, therefore, is occassionally more useful than CCELD (cf. the example with snow above). Dictionaries that are certainly more successful for production are dictionaries of collocations, like the BBI. Yet they are meant for a very advanced user. Good bilingual dictionaries often include useful collocations at noun entries, though their presentation is not always helpful (on CRFD see Piotrowski, 1988). Finally, it seems than EFL dictionaries for text production should assume a radically different form.

The conclusions of this comparison cannot be very revolutionary: both types of dictionaries are complementary and both have something else to offer the users. At present the greatest difference between them is that monolingual dictionaries can be more successfully used to check how to use English words in a correct way, while bilingual dictionaries can show how to say something in English at all. But because of the reasons discussed here, the bilingual dictionary will probably ever be used by foreign learners. The users will not be helped when they are advised not to use bilingual dictionaries at all. The users will be helped only when bilingual dictionaries are significantly improved.

Improvement of bilingual dictionaries is a vast subject and only the most general points can be raised here. First and foremost, I do believe that bilingual dictionaries for learners should be regarded as having nothing to do with translation, at least with translation in the usual sense of the word: acceptable, natural translation cannot be produced when texts are treated as sequences of lexical items that are to be re-written in another language by substitution of equivalents from a bilingual dictionary (Sinclair had certainly this notion of translation in mind when he referred to bilingual dictionaries in Sinclair, 1987: 106). Equivalents in bilingual dictionaries could be treated as natural, L1 metalanguage. It is interesting in this connection that the most cherished tenet of the theory of bilingual lexicography - namely, that the equivalents should be real lexical items, not artificial constructs or L1 definitions, ie that they should be immediately text-insertible - can be explained without any reference to translation. Simply if equivalents are not real lexical units they do not have that high explanatory power which we discussed earlier. They are not vivid at all then. Morever, more notice would have to be taken of the fact that nouns are the basis in a bilingual dictionary. Finally, dictionaries would have to be remodelled so that they would stimulate the users to use L2 words in expressions, rather than add a word to a word. More possibilities are open when the dictionary is used as a tool for expression, not for translation.

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THE COLLOCATIONAL DICTIONARY AND THE ADVANCED LEARNER

Morton Benson

The contrasts between collocations in any two languages are striking. Note, for example, the following juxtaposition of six SerboCroatian verb + noun collocations and the six English equivalents; in all six SerboCroatian collocations the same verb is repeated; however, in each corresponding English collocation a different verb is used:

pustiti bradu	to grow a beard
pusti koren	to take root
pustiti krv	to draw blood
pustiti motor	to start an engine
pustiti ploču	to play a record
pustiti zmaja	to fly a kite

Thousands of similar contrasts could be cited.

The need to identify and list the key collocations of English became clear to me in the mid 1960s when I began work on the compilation of a *SerboCroatian-English Dictionary* in Yugoslavia; at that time no dictionary adequately showed the major collocations that are used in English. Consequently, I began to keep a card file of important collocations that were encountered.

Actually, several collocational dictionaries of English had been compiled in non-English-speaking countries. Without exception, they were seriously marred by unacceptable English. Here are several examples of unacceptable English taken from *Kenkyusha's New Dictionary of English Collocations: I was affrighted at the sight; make an answer to a question; the cat approaches to the tiger; the baboons busted the fastenings of their cages; mother, may I go in the films; don't play the mischief with the cards I have arranged; they acted their wanton pranks with undoubted licentiousness; to take out one's modest reflection from a newspaper package*, etc. Reum's *Dictionary* contains constructions such as *to remove someone's jealousy; the farmer jogged to town on his steed; to make opposition; to recreate the spirits,* etc.

The early collocational dictionaries often confused collocations and idioms. An idiom is a fixed phrase the meaning of which does not reflect the meanings of its component parts. Typical examples of idioms are *to let the cat out of the* *bag*'to reveal a secret'; *when the chips are down* 'in a critical situation'; *to cool one's heels* 'to be kept waiting', etc.

Collocations, on the other hand, are fixed, recurrent combinations of words in which each word basically retains its meaning. Collocations are usually divided into two types -- grammatical collocations and lexical collocations. (Benson, 1985: 61-62)

Grammatical collocations consist of a dominant word (a verb, noun, or adjective) and a grammatical or dependent word, typically a preposition. The role of grammatical collocations in linguistic analysis was described by Chomsky over twenty years ago (1965: 191). He discussed in detail constructions of the type *to decide on the boat*. When this phrase means 'to choose a boat', it contains the grammatical collocation ('close construction' in Chomsky's terminology) *to decide on*. When, however, the same phrase means 'to make a decision while on the boat', we have a verb (*decide*), followed by an adverbial (= prepositional phrase), i.e., a free combination.

Another example of the contrast between a grammatical collocation and an adverbial phrase is provided by the homonymous sentence *we are losing interest in Switzerland*. If the sentence means 'we no longer want to learn about Switzerland', it contains the grammatical collocation *interest in*. If the sentence means 'we could earn a greater return on our savings outside of Switzerland', it contains an adverbial (in *Switzerland*).

In contrast to grammatical collocations, lexical collocations consist of two equal components, such as verb + adjective, and verb + adverb. Examples of verb + noun collocations were cited above. Examples of the other types will be given below.

It is necessary here to mention two developments that are vital to any discussion of collocational dictionaries. The first was the appearance of the British learners' dictionaries. We have in mind A S Hornby's *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English* (OALDCE), the *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English* (LDOCE), and the recent *Collins Cobuild English Language Dictionary* (Cobuild). Their major contribution to collocational lexicography was the introduction of a large number of grammatical collocations (Benson, 1985: 62).

The second important development was the work begun in the Soviet Union by Apresyan, Mel'čuk, and Zholkovsky. They introduced the concept of *lexical functions*, ie, specific semantic relationships between a key word and other words or word combinations. The first paper in English on this important lexicological research was published by Apresyan, Mel'čuk, and Zholkovsky in 1969.

Mel'čuk and his colleagues have continued their work in North America. In 1984, Mel'čuk and Zholkovsky published a 'fragment' of their *Explanatory Combinatorial Dictionary of Modern Russian* (ECD). At present Mel'čuk and colleagues are compiling the *Dictionnaire explicatif et combinatoire du francais contemporain* (DEC), the first volume of which also appeared in 1984.

It is clear that the ECD and the DEC are not intended primarily for learners of Russian or French. On pages 43 and 73 of the ECD, for example, Mel'čuk states that it is "completely THEORY-ORIENTED" and that it is "designed primarily for linguists". The first fragment of the ECD contains only 282 entries. The first volume of the DEC consists of a detailed description of Mel'čuk's theories and fifty specimen entries embodying these theories.

It must be stressed that the work of Mel'čuk and his colleagues has had a significant impact on collocational lexicography. To be sure, many of their approximately fifty lexical functions are not suitable for inclusion in learners' or general-purpose dictionaries; however, some of these functions are of utmost importance to compilers of such dictionaries. In fact, the lexical functions that we have referred to above are closely related to Mel'čuk's lexical functions.

In order to meet the practical needs of the advanced ESL/EFL learner, the *BBI Combinatory Dictionary of English* was published in 1986. The BBI includes both grammatical and lexical collocations. The goal of the BBI is to provide a large number of key collocations and to arrange them so that they can be found easily and quickly (Benson, 1989, forthcoming). We will now discuss how the BBI deals with the various problems that a collocational dictionary must solve in order to meet the needs of the advanced learner of English.

First, we take up the question of what factors influenced the choice of material for inclusion in the BBI. In his discussion of German collocational dictionaries, Hausmann (120) points out that they have been clogged with a huge number of free, trivial, unnecessary word combinations. Discussing current German collocational dictionaries, he asks why the adjectives *neu* and *alt* should be included as modifiers in the entries for *Auto, Haus, Hemd, Kleid, Schuhe,* etc. Or, why the verbs *kaufen* and *verkaufen* should be shown in the entries for *Bild, Buch, Haus, Hut,* etc. The point is that combinations such as *neues Haus, alter Mantel, ein Bild kaufen, ein Haus verkaufen*, etc are free and *predictable* in the sense that they can be produced easily be any learner of German who has mastered the elements of German grammar and who knows these lexical items.

It is obvious that such free combinations could *not* be entered in learners' dictionaries. Thus, learners of English who wish to translate *voir la porte*, or *die Tür sehen*, or *ver la puerta*, or *vedere la porta*, or *videt' dver'* will have no difficulty; they can simply translate element by element from French, German, Spanish, Italian, Russian, etc into English and will end up with 'to see the door'. (We assume that any learners, except for rank beginners, will know that in English a noun object follows the verb.) We see here that free combinations do not pose special problems for the learner of English. However, when these same learners, wish to translate *enfoncer la porte, die Tür aufbrechen, tumbar la puerta, sfondare la porta, vzlomat' dver'*, they face a problem immeasurably more difficult. They must find the arbitrary, unpredictable corresponding English lexical collocation. The BBI has attempted to provide such recurrent combinations.

We now turn to the question of where collocations should be placed in a collocational dictionary so that they can be found quickly and easily. Hausmann breaks down lexical collocations into a 'base' and a 'collocator' or 'collocate' (1985: 119-121). Whenever a noun is part of a collocation, it is the base and the adjective or verb is the collocator. When a lexical collocation consists of two nouns as in *a bit of advice, a pride of lions*, the second noun is the base. Hausmann emphasizes that in learners' dictionaries, designed to help users encode, ie, generate texts, collocations should be placed at the entries for bases. This principle is applied in the BBI. Hausmann's point is that when learners are writing a text and need to form collocations in the language being studied, they will think first of the base. Thus, in the case of a verb + noun collocation (*to put up resistance*) or adjective + noun collocation (*a confirmed bachelor*) or noun + verb collocation (*an engine stalls*) the learner will think first of the noun. Advanced learners of the language will normally know the noun or can easily find it in any bilingual dictionary. In noun + noun collocations, advanced learners will usually know the base (the second noun): *a piece of furniture, a colony of bees*. Learners who wish to express in English the FL collocations given in the preceding paragraph will undoubtedly know that the equivalent English noun, the base, is 'door'. If they look up this noun in the BBI, they will find the needed collocations *break down the door* and *force the door*.

Experiments have been conducted with speakers of Arabic, Hungarian, and Russian who are teachers or advanced learners of English to see if they could, in fact, find collocations easily when using the BBI (Benson and Benson, Benson 1989, Heliel). Here are some typical sentences from a monolingual completion test administered to the Hungarian and Russian language teachers: *if a fire breaks out, the alarm will...*; *you must... a banana before you eat it*; *the boy has a new bicycle, but he doesn't know how to...it; the X ray showed a fracture -- the doctor had to...the bones*; *nurses must...many injections every day*; *the reporters wanted to...interviews with members of the cast*; *our forces were able to...heavy losses on the enemy*; *her lawyer wanted to...a plea of not guilty*; *the police asked the judge to...a search warrant*; *the American Congress can...a presidential veto*. With the help of the BBI, the participants were able to complete these lexical collocations.

The results of these experiments have demonstrated conclusively that learners cope very well with the BBI and that the placing of collocations at the entries for the bases is the appropriate solution. Heliel writes (7), for example, that "...the unpredictable element...was the verb collocate either to the right or to the left of the English noun. The *noun* entry with such collocates in the BBI has solved the problem." Benson and Benson point out (343) that the participants in the experiment were able to "find the needed collocations quickly and easily".

One might ask if the learners' dictionaries such as OALDCE, LDOCE, and Cobuild treat lexical collocations adequately. In fact, it is clear that they had no consistent policy in regard to providing lexical collocations and, consequently, they have omitted a huge number. Typical omissions in all three dictionaries at the very beginning of the alphabet are: *display ability, (an) innate ability, an unexcused absence, patently absurd, sexual abuse, a yawning abyss, depress an accelerator, ease up on an accelerator, affect an accent, a thick accent, direct access,* etc.

Just as serious as the omissions is the fact that many of the collocations that these dictionaries do give are practically impossible to find. These collocations were placed not at the base, but at the collocator. At the entry for the verb *draw*, the LODCE gives the collocations *draw attention, draw blood, draw a crowd, draw a gun, draw support*, but does not give them at the corresponding noun entries. Similar examples could be cited from the other two dictionaries. Hausmann (1985: 122) had emphasized that attempting to find the collocation through the collocator, that is, through the verb, is a hopeless task.

We now turn to the treatment of grammatical collocations in dictionaries. It was indicated above that the British learners' dictionaries do include a large number of grammatical collocations. However, as shown in Lemmens and Wekker, the LDOCE and OALDOCE are far from consistent in providing grammatical collocations. For example, Lemmens and Wekker (70) point out that LDOCE, which has the reputation of being the most sophisticated learners' dictionary in regard to grammatical information, often fails to give needed information such as the possible use of the infinitive after nouns or the use of a *that* clause after nouns. Lemmens and Wekker (65) also point out that LDOCE does not provide adequate information about the use of pronoun objects with transitive verbs; as a result, users of LDOCE might form sentences that are unacceptable in American English such as **He gave him them* (65). The latest learners' dictionary, the Cobuild, which was not included in the Lemmens and Wekker study, also is defective in its treatment of grammatical collocations. Although, for example, it gives many adjective + preposition collocations, it omits many others. Examples of such omissions are *absorbed with, adequate for, adverse to, agog over, allied with, annoyed at, atypical of, available to,* etc.

The BBI was the first dictionary to consistently provide certain types of grammatical collocations. Here are several examples of such constructions.

1. certain animate nouns that may be followed by the preposition *to: ambassador to, advisor to, counselor to,* etc.
2. certain nouns that are followed by *that clause; allegation, gossip, hint, rumor,* etc: *we heard a rumor that he would resign soon*.
3. the semantic equivalence of constructions after certain nouns and adjectives: *it's a pleasure to work with them = it's a pleasure working with them = they*

are a pleasure to work with; *it's nice working with them* = *they are nice to work with*.

4. synonymous prepositions: *to work at a library or to work in a library* (*museum, school*); *who works in this ward*? = *who works on this ward*?

5. consistent indication and illustration of the possibility of the dative movement transformation: *she sent the book to him* = *she sent him the book*; but, *she mentioned the book to him*; one cannot say **she mentioned him the book*.

The British learners' dictionaries have been criticized for excessive reliance on complicated codes. The BBI makes use of far fewer codes. The only codes utilized are applied to verb entries. None at all are used in noun and adjective entries. For example, the entry for the adjective *fond* simply states in plain English that the adjective *fond* 'cannot stand alone' and that it must be followed by a prepositional phrase beginning with *of*. In addition to the codes, *illustrative phrases are given for all verb collocations*. Other types of collocations are not coded at all, but are consistently provided with illustrative phrases. Note that Lemmens and Wekker wrote that the learners' dictionaries often fail to illustrate constructions. Of the OALDOCE, they wrote (62-63) that there would be "an enormous improvement if each VP was systematically illustrated by at least one example" and they point out that a "well-organized system of examples is at least as important as the codes themselves. If examples are always ordered according to the codes and if each code gets at least one example, the dictionary user can rely less on the explanations given in Introductions, Guides or Tables". Lemmens and Wekker (73) wrote of the LDOCE that it "still does not exemplify all codes"

The BBI consistently calls the user's attention to the difference between the British variety of English (BE) and the American variety (AE). It was not feasible to include coverage of other varieties. Constructions peculiar to either AE or to BE are labeled as such. If a construction is not labeled, it can be assumed to be World or Common English (CE). The vast majority of the constructions entered in the BBI, of course, are not labeled. However, the advanced learner of English should pay careful attention to those differences that are marked. As part of the above-mentioned experiment conducted with Hungarian and Russian speakers, the following test on varietal differences was administered. Without the help of the BBI, the percentage of correct answers was only around 22%. Those taking the test were asked to indicate which of the following sentences are acceptable in CE, which are acceptable only in AE or in BE, and which are unacceptable in any form of English.

1. The workers agreed to the proposal.
2. Her description of the incident approximated to the truth.

3. We'll catch up to you later.
4. We'll catch you up later.
5. The swimmer got a cramp.
6. Our firm did a deal with them.
7. Can you direct me to the post office?
8. She explained us the problem.
9. Politicians are always on the firing line.
10. Are your friends home?
11. We cancelled our membership of that organization.
12. She is nervous of strangers.
13. Nothing can prevent this disease spreading.
14. The students were protesting the war.
15. She recommended me a good dictionary.
16. They sent us hot regards.
17. This item was not expensive; it was on sale.
18. Their daughter left school and went to university.
19. He has been seconded to another department.
20. She is slated to be promoted next month.
21. That sounds a great idea.
22. We want to visit with our friends.
23. Do you work at weekends?
24. I wrote my father.

Sentences 1 and 7 are CE.

Sentences 3, 9, 10, 14, 17, 20, 22, and 24 are AE: 3 (CE has *We'll catch up with you later*); 9 (BE has *Politicians are always in the firing line*); 10 (CE has *Are your friends at home*); 14 (CE has *The students were protesting against the war*); 17 (BE has *The item was not expensive; it was at/in a sale*); 20 (CE has *She is scheduled to be promoted next month*); 22 (CE has *We want to visit our friends*); 25 (CE has *I wrote to my father*).

Sentences 2, 4, 5, 6, 11, 12, 13, 15, 18, 19, 21, 23 are BE: 2 (CE has *Her description of the incident approximated the truth*); 4 (CE has *We'll catch up with you later*); 5 (CE has *The swimmer got a cramp*); 6 (AE has *Our firm made a deal with them* and CE has *Our firm struck a deal with them*); 11 (AE has *We canceled our membership in that organization*); 12 (CE has *She is nervous about strangers*); 13 (CE has *Nothing can prevent this disease from spreading*_; 15 (CE has *She recommended a good dictionary to me*); 18 (AE has *She has been assigned temporarily to another department*); 21 (CE has *That sounds like a great idea*); 23 (CE has *Do you work on weekends*? and AE has *Do you work weekends*?).

Sentences 8 and 16 are unacceptable: 8 (The sentence should be *She explained the problem to us*); 16 (The sentence should be *They sent us warmest regards*).

Many of the examples used in the BBI were suggested by material taken from newspapers, magazines, books, etc. Others were made up by the authors. This procedure is based on the principle that native speakers of a language can produce an infinite number of grammatical, ie, 'correct' utterances in their language (Chomsky, 1957: 15). Examples in a dictionary should not only be grammatically acceptable; they should be lexicographically acceptable, ie, in the words of Archibald Hall, 'immediately and universally acceptable to native speakers' (Benson, Benson, Ilson, 1986a: 210).

The argument is often put forward that examples should be taken only from citations and not 'concocted' by the compilers of a dictionary. This dispute was intensified with the appearance of Cobuild. The introduction to this dictionary (XV) states that its "examples were taken from actual texts wherever possible." It decries the use of made up examples and claims that they "have no authority apart from the thoughts of the person who creates them and they are very often quite unnatural".

Such a position seems to reject the principle that native speakers of a language can produce an infinite number of grammatically acceptable utterances. In fact, an examination of the examples given in Cobuild shows that some of them, presumably taken from texts, are decidedly inappropriate for a learners' dictionary. For example, in the entry for *evoke* the Cobuild gives the pompous illustration "He had never quite lost the sense of wonder evoked by the sight of his own home". In the entry for the noun *peer* Cobuild gives "Comparing students with their peers outside university, they are more likely to have emotional problems." This ambiguous sentence leaves the reader wondering *who* has problems! (Using the BE construction *outside university* without a label demonstrates disregard of the need to indicate varietal differences.

Other examples of stilted English can be cited: "They had dropped their championship of Jones, who had given up hope of getting justice" (Under *Championship*); "He saw Vita as the companion of a lifetime" (under *companion*); "Politicians squint at us complacently from the screens" (under *complacently*); "a mumble that suggested the extremity of drunkenness" (under *extremity*); "She was smoking endless cigarettes from a long black holder" (under *holder*); "To the east there is a dense date plantation bounded by marsh" (under *marsh*); "We sat in the pocket of warmth by the fire" (under *pocket*); "We struggle to refresh our imagery, to keep it up-to-date" (under *refresh*); "The sight of the dead bird ended my relish for shooting at anything live" (under *relish*), etc. It is perfectly possible that such sentences and phrases might sound somewhat more natural within a text, but when cited out of context, especially in a learners' dictionary, they are stilted. Summers (13) also finds that the Cobuild citations "... can result in decontextualized examples which have an 'unfinished' feel ...". Summers goes on to point out that by way of contrast the LDOCE citations corpus was used only as a *basis* for making up examples, which were "both typical and explanatory".

The above has been an attempt to describe how a collocational dictionary, such as the BBI, can help advanced students produce acceptable English texts. It is to be hoped that collocational dictionaries will become part of advanced ESL/EFL courses.

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PART III

INSIDE THE LEARNERS' DICTIONARY

Grammar in Dictionaries
Thomas Herbst

The Treatment of Pronunciation in Some Monolingual General Dictionaries Used by Learners of English
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How Many Words is a Picture Worth? A Review of Illustrations in Dictionaries
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A Vocabulary for Writing Dictionaries
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GRAMMAR IN DICTIONARIES

Thomas Herbst

1 TYPES OF GRAMMATICAL INFORMATION IN DICTIONARIES

Although grammars and dictionaries have complementary functions to fulfill, "grammar in dictionaries" is not a contradiction in terms. Whereas a grammar (in the sense of a grammar book) contains all the generalizable features of a language, the dictionary contains its idiosyncrasies. Syntactic rules such as the use of the tenses or aspects in English are largely independent of individual words and thus fall under the domain of a grammar, but this does not apply to all grammatical phenomena: It is part of the grammatical description of a language such as English, for example, to state that a distinction between count and uncount nouns has to be made, to identify the different types of complementation verbs can take, or, in the field of morphology, to list the various morphological possibilities for forming the past tense of a verb etc. However, one would not expect the treatment of such phenomena in a grammar to be comprehensive in the sense that it would provide information on, for example, all the complementation possibilities of every verb or list all the uncount nouns of the language etc. The place for this type of grammatical information which cannot be generalized is the dictionary. This is why such dictionaries as the Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary (OALD), the Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English (LDOCE) or the Collins COBUILD English Language Dictionary (COBUILD), which will be compared in some detail here, all make use of sophisticated systems of grammatical information.

For English, the types of grammatical information that fall into this idiosyncratic, or word-specific, category include:

(a) morphological features such as irregular plural, tense and participle or comparative and superlative forms
(b) complementation patterns of verbs, adjectives and nouns
(c) count, uncount, singular or plural nouns
(d) stative and dynamic verbs
(e) position of adjectives
(f) restrictions on comparatives or superlatives.

This type of information needs to be treated in learners' dictionaries, also because languages differ in these respects, eg comparing English, German and French:

(1a) They are sleeping.
(1b) The hotel sleeps over 200 people.

(1c) Sie schlafen.
(1d) *Das Hotel schläft über 200 Menschen.

(1e) Ils dorment.
(1f) *L' hotel dort plus que 200 personnes.

(2a) The spaghetti was/*were nice.
(2b) Die Spaghetti *war/waren gut.

In bilingual lexicography the extent to which such features are covered depends on the differences between the two languages described. Thus, pairs of words such as *milk/Milch* oder *whisky/Whisky*, in English and German, do not require detailed specification as to their uses as count or uncount nouns since their syntactic behaviour is similar in both languages:

(3a) Whisky is my favourite drink.
(3b) Whisky ist mein Lieblingsgetränk.

(3c) Could I have another whisky?
(3d) Könnte ich noch einen Whisky haben?

In the case of *avoid/vermeiden* a good German-English dictionary should however indicate that *avoid* takes an *ing*-complement and not, as *vermeiden* in German, an infinitive. However, the monolingual dictionary, which does not aim at such a clearly defined target group, will also have to include such information as count/uncount in the case of *whisky*.

2 TARGET GROUP AND FUNCTIONS OF THE DICTIONARY

The amount and quality of the grammatical information provided by a dictionary depends largely on the target group and the purposes the dictionary is to serve. For the native speaker, such information on words such as *avoid* or *whisky* may be completely superfluous - it is not given in a dictionary such as the *Collins English Dictionary*, for instance.[1] However, in many respects, the foreign learners' needs, are quite different from those of the native speakers': grammatical information is of utmost importance when using a dictionary as an aid to text production - Hausmann (1974: 99) refers to the learners' dictionary used for this purpose as a production dictionary (distinguishing it from the decoding dictionary).[2]

A second target group should not be neglected in foreign language lexicography - the foreign language teachers who are not native speakers themselves. While for learners it is perfectly sufficient to find the most common construction(s) of a word in the dictionary, the teachers may want to know whether a particular construction one of their students has used is acceptable, even if it may not be common. Thus, for the purposes of the teacher, a further function, that of the marking dictionary, can be identified. Of course, much greater demands have to be made of a marking dictionary since it has to be much more comprehensive than a mere production dictionary.

3 TARGET GROUP AND FORM OF GRAMMATICAL INFORMATION

Thus the intended target group of the dictionary determines

- which kind of grammatical information has to be included (on the basis of the mother tongue(s) of the users and resulting predictable sources of error)
- how specific the information should be with respect to the functions of production and/or marking dictionary.

The intended target group is also, however, the determining factor with respect to the way the information is given in the dictionary. This concerns the degree of abstraction that can be employed as well as the grammatical model on which the grammatical description is based. One of the crucial questions in this respect is how much familiarity with particular linguistic models and their terminology can reasonably be expected of the users. Would they know what pred stands for? Would they know that U stands for 'uncount' and that this label is not to be interpreted as a semantic category but that it is syntactically relevant? Are the users of the dictionary familiar with terms such as transitive and intransitive? Could they be expected to know terms such as ergative or complex transitive? Even if of course the terminology used is explained in the front-matter of the dictionary, the more familiar users already are with the categories used, the easier they will find it to interpret grammatical information.

Again, the problem for the lexicographer, especially in the case of a monolingual dictionary aiming at the world market, is that the target group is far too heterogeneous to provide reliable criteria for decisions of this kind. As far as first year university students of English in the Federal Republic of Germany are concerned, one can safely assume that for a majority the answers to all the questions above is no. This lack of familiarity with even basic linguistic terminology is a consequence of a more communicative approach to language teaching (whose merits, in other respects, will not be questioned). However, this does not mean that one should avoid all terminology in the dictionary: First of all, grammatical terms are useful in lexicography because they often provide short labels for describing a rather complex state of affairs. Furthermore, users who are familiar with the terminology (- teachers, more advanced students) will presumably not only welcome this, but expect the dictionary to use the same categories that they use in other contexts such as grammar classes etc, at least in the case of basic terminology.

The choice of linguistic terminology and the grammatical model on which the information in the dictionary is to be based is thus a difficult compromise where aiming at too much simplicity can be as wrong as presupposing too much. In any case, terminology should be used as unobtrusively as possible.[3] Furthermore, terminology that is not widely used or accepted or terminology that is restricted to a particular linguistic school should be avoided. In the case of English, a certain framework of orientation is provided by the grammars of Quirk/Greenbaum/Leech/Svartvik (such as the Comprehensive Grammar of the English Language CGEL 1985), which provide a basis for EFL-teaching and EFL teaching materials used all over the world. This is certainly true of the terms in these grammars such as attributive or predicative, count or uncount, taken over from traditional grammar, or of the word classes as established in CGEL - such terms as determiner can now be seen to be generally accepted. This does not apply in the same way to rather arcane terms such as subjunct or adjunct, which, for example, have not been adopted in the Communicative Grammar by Leech/Svartvik, or to the controversial category of prepositional verbs.[4]

4 LEVELS OF ABSTRACTION

While dictionaries do not differ greatly in the terminology they employ, there are striking differences with respect to the form in which grammatical information is provided. Grammatical information - like any other information in dictionaries - is subject to space restrictions. This has led to the development of various coding systems aiming at presenting complex grammatical information in as little space as possible. Basically, three types of system can be identified:

1. Non-transparent coding systems in which a symbol used in an entry is explained at a different place in the dictionary and is not based on any terminology that is generally accepted, and also used, outside the dictionary.

2. Partially transparent mnemotechnic coding systems in which symbols are used that are explained at a different place in the dictionary but that are designed according to mnemotechnic principles and to a certain extent draw upon terminology the user is expected to be familiar with.

3. Wholly transparent coding systems in which more or less self-explanatory codes are used which do not require familiarity with any special terminology used only in any one dictionary.

The drawback of non-transparent coding systems is that they are only employed in a particular dictionary - which means that, unless the users make constant use of the system, they are bound not to learn the symbols and have to check them every time they are looking something up. The main problem with non-transparent and partially transparent coding systems is that the user may not even realize what kind of information is given by a particular code. User research at Augsburg University showed, for instance, that quite a number of students who had worked with the Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary (OALD3) at school did not know that the verb pattern codes provided information on complementation.[5] In recognition of such facts there is an obvious tendency in dictionaries, especially in learners' dictionaries, to increase the transparency of the information given.

5 TRANSPARENCY AND DEPTH OF INFORMATION

Although the extent to which grammatical information can be given in a transparent form depends very much on the area of grammar treated, there are noticeable differences between various dictionaries in this respect.

Irregular morphological forms are usually given in a wholly transparent form. Thus, for example, the Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary (3rd edition 1974: OALD3) and the Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English (2nd edition 1987: LDOCE 2) both spell out such forms as bought in the entry of buy, the only difference being that OALD provided an indication of the type of form through the abbreviations pt,pp (past tense, past participle), which has now been given up in the fourth edition.

The Collins COBUILD Dictionary of the English Language is even more explicit and spells out all morphological forms in full; not only for irregular verbs, eg "buy, buys, buying, bought", but also for irregular verbs, eg "busk, busks, busking, busks". Similarly, synthetic comparative and superlative forms are spelt out for all adjectives in COBUILD, whereas LDOCE2 and OALD3 only indicate irregularities in this area.[6].

LDOCE1 contained a type of morphological information on adjectives that the other dictionaries do not provide, namely whether an adjective takes only synthetic comparative and superlative forms (happy - happier - happiest) or can take synthetic (*securer*) and analytic (*more secure*) forms. This was done by using two non-transparent codes/Wa1/(synthetic) and /Wa2/ (synthetic or analytic). Similarly, a code /Wa5/ indicated that an adjective took no comparative forms (*dead*).

Interestingly, the new edition of LDOCE (LDOCE2) no longer contains these codes: /Wa5/ has been replaced by a transparent code/*no comp*/, whereas, in the case of /Wa1/and/Wa2/ the information as such is no longer given. Similarly, LDOCE1 code /Wv5/, which indicated that a verb cannot occur in the progressive form in a particular sense (**The wine is tasting nice*) has been replaced by a transparent code *not in progressive forms*.

COBUILD follows a similar policy by marking a verb such as *taste* as "NO CONT, NO IMPER"[7], whereas OALD3 does not indicate either of these features systematically.

The tendency to increase transparency in codes in the second edition of LDOCE also shows in the abolition of codes such as /GC/ and /GU/, which indicated that the verb can either be singular or plural, which is made much more explicit in LDOCE2 by /+ *sing./pl. v/* (as indeed it is in COBUILD, which uses a code "VB CAN BE SING OR PL). It is all the more surprising that LDOCE2 has retained a partly transparent and a partly non-transparent coding system for the positional variants of adjectives, ie the letter codes A (for attributive only) and F (followed by a noun) whose mnemotechnic value is limited. OALD[8] and COBUILD make use of a wholly transparent code *attrib* and *pred*.[9]

There is thus a general tendency to increase the transparency of grammatical information. The changes made in the second edition of LDOCE are a strong indication of the importance its editors attach to the transparency of information: Obviously, non-transparent codes were seen to have very little value: Where supplying information that was not considered essential for the user would have cost too much space (which also reduces the readability of the entry), the policy adopted was obviously to sacrifice the information rather than include a non-transparent code. Similarly, COBUILD usually uses wholly transparent codes in its grammatical column.

6 COMPLEMENTATION PATTERNS

6.1 The pattern system of the first three editions of OALD and of the first edition of LDOCE

Information on valency or complementation[10] is of great importance to the foreign learner[11]. The verb patterns of the *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary* were one of several outstanding features which marked this dictionary as the pioneer of a new type of dictionary, the learner's dictionary. The patterns used in the first three editions of the OALD are based on Hornby's *Guide to Patterns and Usage in English* and were adopted for the purposes of lexicographical description. The system consists of 65 main verb patterns with another 65 sub-patterns. It suffers from a number of drawbacks:

1. The patterns are not transparent: the numbering has no mnemotechnic value whatsoever. There is nothing within the codes that shows that VP 4A, 4B, 4C, 4E, 4F, 7A, 7B, 8, 16A (not 16B), 17 and 20 all refer to constructions with a *to*-infinitive, for instance. This means that the codes are difficult to remember.
2. The subdivision of the patterns is useful for a teaching manual such as Hornby's *Guides* but unnecessary and confusing in a work of reference: In a dictionary there is little point in making distinctions such as the one between VP 19A (*Did you notice anyone standing at the gate?*) and VP 19B (*They left me waiting outside*): Syntactically, this is the same pattern, VP 19A is characterized as "The verbs indicate physical perceptions and are those used in VP 18A", whereas VP 19B "is used for some verbs which do not indicate physical perceptions". Since for a verb such as *feel* both VP 18A and AP 19A are given, information on which other patterns verbs with a particular code take is completely superfluous, as is information on their meaning, which is also given in the dictionary entry. The difficulty of such precise subcategories is illustrated by the fact that for the verb *smell* OALD3 gives VP 19A (but not 18A). Since **Can you smell something burn* is not acceptable in English, VP 19A is only justified on the grounds that *smell* is a verb of inert perception. This example shows that the subdivision of the patterns is unnecessary and sometimes even contradictory.[12]

The first edition of the *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English*, which appeared in 1978, thirty years after the first edition of the OALD, is a definite improvement with respect to pattern information of this kind: Firstly, the pattern system is extended to nouns and adjectives. Secondly, LDOCE1 uses a partially transparent coding system, consisting of a letter and a figure. Both elements have some mnemotechnic value: the letters stand for particular classes of noun, adjective or verb (T for transitive, D for ditransitive etc), the figures for particular constructions (3 for a *to-infinitive*, 4 for the *ing*-form etc). After getting used to the system, users are thus able to work out for themselves the meanings of such patterns as T4, D4 etc. In line with the general trend of the second edition of LDOCE this system was, nevertheless, replaced by a wholly transparent system.

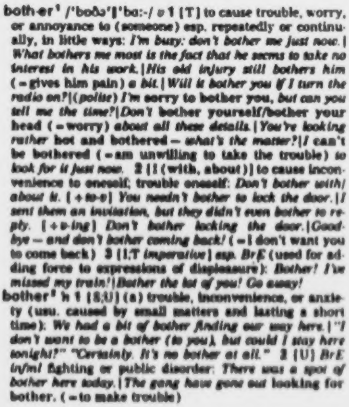
6.2 OALD4, LDOCE2 AND COBUILD

Since the second edition of LDOCE, the fourth edition of the OALD, and - since it is not exclusively designed as a learners' dictionary, with certain reservations - COBUILD represent the three main competitors in the EFL-market at the moment, their three systems will be compared together.

Just as LDOCE2 incorporates a number of major changes OALD4[13], in many respects, represents a dramatic break with the OALD tradition, the throwing overboard of the old pattern system possibly being the most drastic change. OALD4 now uses a partially transparent pattern system, which is similar to that of LDOCE1. It consists of combinations of capital letters for word classes (I, T, D, C, L) and small letters for the complementation possibilities. To a certain extent the system is wholly transparent in that a code such as Tn (transitive verb with noun phrase object) is immediately interpretable (or at least easy to remember). This does not hold true for many other symbols): Although they also have been designed on mnemotechnic principles - Tf (Transitive verb with a finite that-clause). Tw (Transitive verb with a wh-clause), Tt (Transitive verb with to-infinitive), Tsg (Transitive verb + 's form of a noun + ing-form of a verb) - abbreviations such as g for ing-form, p for particle as opposed to pr for preposition do not immediately suggest themselves and can easily be confused.

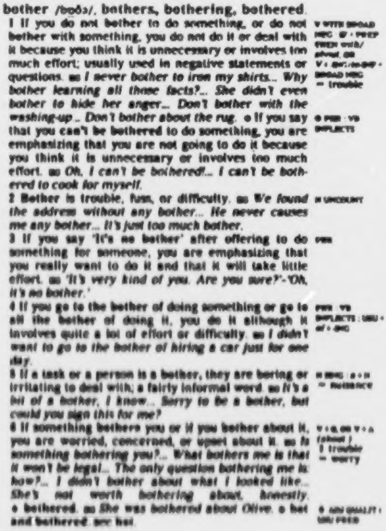
LDOCE2 and COBUILD make use of wholly transparent systems for the complementation of verbs, nouns, and adjectives. LDOCE2 identifies three verb classes: I, T and L, and uses symbols such as +to-v or +v-ing instead of the figures. COBUILD does not identify different verb classes and thus simply uses such abbreviations as V +O and V + ING.

LDOCE2


both·er¹ /ˈbɒðəʳ‖ˈbɑː-/ *v* **1** [T] to cause trouble, worry, or annoyance to (someone) esp. repeatedly or continually, in little ways: *I'm busy: don't bother me just now.*|*What bothers me most is the fact that he seems to take no interest in his work.*|*His old injury still bothers him* (=gives him pain) *a bit.*|*Will it bother you if I turn the radio on?*|(*polite*) *I'm* sorry to bother you, *but can you tell me the time?*|*Don't* bother yourself/bother your head (=worry) *about all these details.*|*You're looking rather* hot and bothered – *what's the matter?*|*I* can't be bothered (=am unwilling to take the trouble) *to look for it just now.* **2** [I (with, about)] to cause inconvenience to oneself; trouble oneself: *Don't bother with/about it.* [+to-v] *You needn't bother to lock the door.*|*I sent them an invitation, but they didn't even bother to reply.* [+v-ing] *Don't bother locking the door.*|*Goodbye – and don't bother coming back!* (=I don't want you to come back) **3** [I;T *imperative*] esp. *BrE* (used for adding force to expressions of displeasure): *Bother! I've missed my train!*|*Bother the lot of you! Go away!*

bother² *n* **1** [S;U] (a) trouble, inconvenience, or anxiety (usu. caused by small matters and lasting a short time): *We had a bit of bother finding our way here.*|*"I don't want to be a bother (to you), but could I stay here tonight?" "Certainly. It's no bother at all."* **2** [U] *BrE infml* fighting or public disorder: *There was a spot of bother here today.*|*The gang have gone out* looking for bother. (=to make trouble)

COBUILD


bother /bɒðə/, **bothers, bothering, bothered.**
1 If you do not bother to do something, or do not bother with something, you do not do it or deal with it because you think it is unnecessary or involves too much effort; usually used in negative statements or questions. ▫ *I never bother to iron my shirts... Why bother learning all those facts?... She didn't even bother to hide her anger... Don't bother with the washing-up... Don't bother about the rug.* ● If you say that you can't be bothered to do something, you are emphasizing that you are not going to do it because you think it is unnecessary or involves too much effort. ▫ *Oh, I can't be bothered!... I can't be bothered to cook for myself.*
2 Bother is trouble, fuss, or difficulty. ▫ *We found the address without any bother... He never causes me any bother... It's just too much bother.*
3 If you say 'It's no bother' after offering to do something for someone, you are emphasizing that you really want to do it and that it will take little effort. ▫ *'It's very kind of you. Are you sure?'-'Oh, it's no bother.'*
4 If you go to the bother of doing something or go to all the bother of doing it, you do it although it involves quite a lot of effort or difficulty. ▫ *I didn't want to go to the bother of hiring a car just for one day.*
5 If a task or a person is a bother, they are boring or irritating to deal with; a fairly informal word. ▫ *It's a bit of a bother, I know... Sorry to be a bother, but could you sign this for me?*
6 If something bothers you or if you bother about it, you are worried, concerned, or upset about it. ▫ *Is something bothering you?... What bothers me is that it won't be legal... The only question bothering me is how?... I didn't bother about what I looked like... She's not worth bothering about, honestly.* ● **bothered.** ▫ *She was bothered about Olive.* ● **hot and bothered:** see **hot.**

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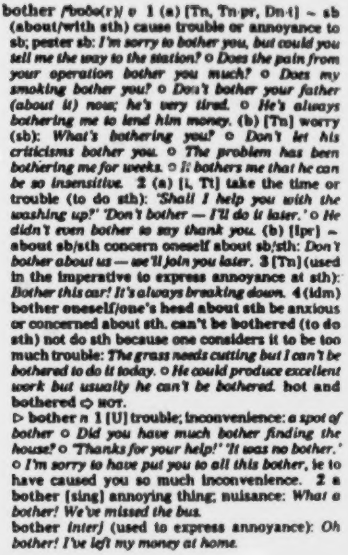
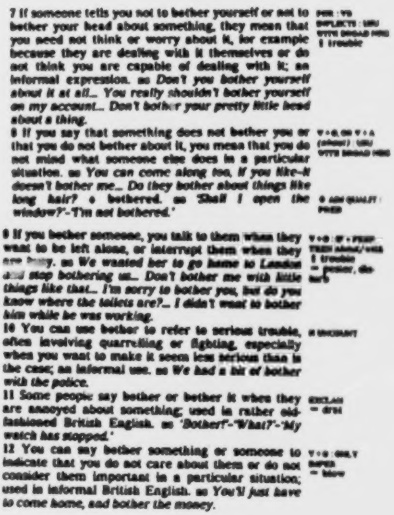
OALD4



bother /ˈbɒðə(r)/ *v* 1 (a) [Tn, Tn·pr, Dn·t] ~ sb (about/with sth) cause trouble or annoyance to sb; pester sb: *I'm sorry to bother you, but could you tell me the way to the station?* ○ *Does the pain from your operation bother you much?* ○ *Does my smoking bother you?* ○ *Don't bother your father (about it) now; he's very tired.* ○ *He's always bothering me to lend him money.* (b) [Tn] worry (sb): *What's bothering you?* ○ *Don't let his criticisms bother you.* ○ *The problem has been bothering me for weeks.* ○ *It bothers me that he can be so insensitive.* 2 (a) [I, Tt] take the time or trouble (to do sth): *'Shall I help you with the washing up?' 'Don't bother — I'll do it later.'* ○ *He didn't even bother to say thank you.* (b) [Ipr] ~ about sb/sth concern oneself about sb/sth: *Don't bother about us — we'll join you later.* 3 [Tn] (used in the imperative to express annoyance at sth): *Bother this car! It's always breaking down.* 4 (idm) **bother oneself/one's head about sth** be anxious or concerned about sth. **can't be bothered (to do sth)** not do sth because one considers it to be too much trouble: *The grass needs cutting but I can't be bothered to do it today.* ○ *He could produce excellent work but usually he can't be bothered.* **hot and bothered** ⇨ HOT.

▷ **bother** *n* 1 [U] trouble; inconvenience: *a spot of bother* ○ *Did you have much bother finding the house?* ○ *'Thanks for your help!' 'It was no bother.'* ○ *I'm sorry to have put you to all this bother*, ie to have caused you so much inconvenience. 2 **a bother** [sing] annoying thing; nuisance: *What a bother! We've missed the bus.*

bother *interj* (used to express annoyance): *Oh bother! I've left my money at home.*



7 If someone tells you not to **bother** yourself or not to **bother** your head about something, they mean that you need not think or worry about it, for example because they are dealing with it themselves or do not think you are capable of dealing with it; an informal expression. □ *Don't you bother yourself about it at all... You really shouldn't bother yourself on my account... Don't bother your pretty little head about a thing.*

8 If you say that something does not **bother** you or that you do not **bother** about it, you mean that you do not mind what someone else does in a particular situation. □ *You can come along too, if you like–it doesn't bother me... Do they bother about things like long hair?* ◆ **bothered.** □ *'Shall I open the window?'-'I'm not bothered.'*

9 If you **bother** someone, you talk to them when they want to be left alone, or interrupt them when they are busy. □ *We wanted her to go home to London and stop bothering us... Don't bother me with little things like that... I'm sorry to bother you, but do you know where the toilets are?... I didn't want to bother him while he was working.*

10 You can use **bother** to refer to serious trouble, often involving quarrelling or fighting, especially when you want to make it seem less serious than is the case; an informal use. □ *We had a bit of bother with the police.*

11 Some people say **bother** or **bother it** when they are annoyed about something; used in rather old-fashioned British English. □ *'Bother!'-'What?'-'My watch has stopped.'*

12 You can say **bother** something or someone to indicate that you do not care about them or do not consider them important in a particular situation; used in informal British English. □ *You'll just have to come home, and bother the money.*

The three systems differ in a number of important respects:

CRITERION 1: What categories are the patterns based on? OALD4 is the only one of the three dictionaries to use consistently formal criteria: it identifies 5 verb classes (L, I, T, D, C) and the pattern elements are exclusively formal categories such as noun, prepositional phrase, to-infinitive etc. LDOCE2 and COBUILD are inconsistent in that they draw upon both formal and functional categories: LDOCE2 mostly uses pattern elements of the formal level (that-clause, + adv/prep for adverbial/prepositional phrase) but also - in the case of verbs such as give, show etc, which take two objects and are referred to in CGEL as ditransitive[14] - such terms as indirect object and direct object (+ obj(i) + obj(d)). This is confusing insofar as/obj/is also used to mean "that the direct object of a /T/ verb can only be a clause and cannot be a noun or pronoun" (as in You want to see a doctor about your cough). The same mixture of levels is used to indicate the difference between an object and a complement, which has however the advantage that the character of the complement can be described in great detail: Thus /T + obj + n/adj/ stands for She called me (obj) stupid (complement).

Similar objections hold in the case of the COBUILD system, which uses predominantly functional categories such as O (object), C (complement) and A (adjunct), but also formal categories such as to-INF or +ING. Again, the object "can be a noun group or a reflexive pronoun" (COBUILD 1987). COBUILD, however, avoids the problem of using the same symbol for phrases and word classes in the lemma: In pattern codes. n in LDOCE2, as in OALD4, does not really stand for noun but for noun phrase (although the grammar charts in neither dictionary explain this correctly).

CRITERION 2: What terminology is employed? The advantage of the LDOCE treatment is that it presupposes least familiarity with linguistic terminology. COBUILD uses such terms as V-ERG (ergative verb for verbs which are both intransitive and transitive in the same meaning), which is not used frequently in CGEL or its satellite grammars. Similarly, the use of codes such as A (adjunct) or C (complement) presupposes a rather advanced knowledge of descriptive linguistics. The same holds true for OALD4's distinction between 5 verb classes. Although these correspond to the CGEL classification (only D-verbs are called double transitive and not, as in CGEL, ditransitive), learners may not necessarily be familiar with these classes.

CRITERION 3: How is the distinction between obligatory and optional pattern elements made? The distinction between optional and obligatory pattern elements is indicated in different ways in the three dictionaries: OALD4 lists all the patterns of a word with their obligatory elements: bother /Tn, Tn.pr, Dn.t/. LDOCE2 only does this in the case of a verb which can be both transitive and intransitive (bounce: /I;T), but otherwise indicates that a verb can be intransitive (or simply transitive) by giving further elements in brackets in the same code: bother /I(with; about)/. COBUILD uses indicators such as "OR", "USU" and "IF +PREP THEN" to indicate optionality of elements: bore (4): "V, OR V+O USU+A"; assist: "V OR V+O: IF+PREP THEN with/in"/ The codes of both COBUILD and OALD are made unnecessarily long by the avoidance of brackets for optional elements. COBUILD patterns can become difficult to read, especially since "OR", "USU" and "IF THEN" are more prominent in the typeface than the prepositions, for example.

CRITERION 4: How are alternatives indicated? If two prepositions are given in a pattern neither LDOCE2 nor COBUILD make it absolutely clear whether both can be used together or whether "IF PREP then on/upon" respectively, but the same system is used in the case of appeal - (to, against) and "IF PREP THEN to/against". In both dictionaries, this ambiguity could have been avoided by the use in the same sentence (They appealed to the court against this verdict) and slashes where they are alternatives (They insisted on/upon going to Scotland).[15]

CRITERION 5: To what extent are the patterns redundant or confusing? All three pattern systems are inconsistent to some extent. For example, it seems unnecessary to first give information in general terms that has to be specified anyway. This is particularly obvious in the case of particles and prepositional phrases (which in OALD4 are covered by "p" or "pr" in the pattern) when the appropriate particle or preposition is then given before the examples outside the pattern code, as in: bother (6b) "/Ipr/ about sb/sth". The mere indication that a particular word can also take a prepositional phrase pattern is not of much help to the learner if the preposition is not specified; if it is given anyway, there is no need for the information to be given at a higher level of abstraction at all.[16] The same objection holds for COBUILD's "IF PREP THEN", which is a rather roundabout way of indicating optional prepositional phrases. Furthermore, it is unclear when COBUILD gives prepositional phrases as "IF PREP THEN" and when they are given as "A (as)" for example. For instance, it is difficult to see any reason for the different classification of the prepositional phrases in He was summoned to report on the accident to his supervisor, where report is coded V+a (to): IF+PREP THEN on/upon".

LDOCE2 shows a major inconsistency in its use of the symbol /T/. /T/ on its own comprises a noun phrase object as in I want a drink. /T+to-v/ does not stand for He wants you to wait here (which is coded /+obj+to-v) but for sentences such as Do you want to go now? In this respect, the OALD4's system is clearer because the verb class symbol always stands for the verb alone and never for any combinations of verb and object etc.[17]

CRITERION 6: How much detail do the patterns cover? There are obvious restrictions to the subtlety of the information provided. For instance, neither OALD4 nor LDOCE2 distinguishes between wh-clauses and wh-infinitival clauses, which are given as "w" and /+wh-/ respectively. COBUILD uses "REPORT-cl" to cover that- and wh-clauses as in I know (that) she doesn't like it or Do you know where they are?[18] LDOCE2 distinguishes between /+that/ and /+wh/ in such cases, which seems necessary considering that a verb such as believe can take that- but not wh-clauses. LDOCE2 is the only one of the three dictionaries to indicate whether that in a that-clause is optional or not.[19] Through specifying the form of the complements LDOCE2 is also able to be more precise than COBUILD by coding go in sentences such as She's going grey as /L+adj/, which - in contrast to COBUILD's V+C, but like OALD4's La - rules out noun phrase complements.

CRITERION 7: How and where are the codes? Of the three dictionaries in question, COBUILD certainly has the most original way of presenting grammatical information, ie by using a small extra column. OALD4 follows the tradition of having all the codes together at the beginning of each sense before the examples. Individual prepositions and particles are given after the codes in bold print, as in /Tn, Tn.p/~ sb (around/about) under boss. LDOCE2 follows a new policy and as a rule places the grammar codes directly before the appropriate example sentences, which makes it much easier for the user to interpret the grammar codes.[20] This also means that long lists of patterns are avoided in LDOCE2, which also contributes to their accessibility. This cannot always be said of COBUILD, where one finds patterns such as "V+O/REPORT-CL/QUOTE. OR V: IF + PREP THAN on" which are not always easy to interpret. OALD4 can at times produce quite long lists such as /Tn, TN.pr, Tn.p, Dn.n, Dn.pr/~ sb/sth (with one); ~sth (for sb)" at bring.

Since many users will have to check the codes while looking a word up, the place where they are explained in the dictionary is explained in the preface and listed in the inside cover of the dictionary, though it seems rather unfortunate that OALD does not list the patterns in alphabetical order. LDOCE2 also contains a separate plastic table with a list of the codes (on which /+ n/adj is missing), which can be taken out of the book to facilitate reference[21]. COBUILD's codes unfortunately are not listed in a summary table but included in the main body of the dictionary. This does not make reference to them very easy, especially since, under O for object, for example, one is referred to patterns containing O, such as V+O, V+O+A etc, which are all explained separately.

Criterion 8: To what extent are semantic and collocational features of pattern elements indicated? In many cases, it is not enough to know that, for instance, the prepositions at and with can be used with an adjective such as angry if there is no indication of whether they are synonymous and whether there are any collocational restrictions on these patterns. To a certain extent, learner's dictionaries include such semantic aspects (i) through examples (where LDOCE2 follows the policy of emphasizing important collocations in bold type), (ii) through the use of sb or sth in bold type as in OALD4 (and, in the case of phrasal verbs, LDOCE2) and (iii) in definitions. Thus definitions such as "to arrange or decide (esp a time or place when something will happen)" under appoint (6) in LDOCE2 or "cause trouble or annoyance to sb; pester sb" under bother in OALD4 give some indication of the collocational range of words. In this respect, COBUILD's sentence definitions - "If a book, painting, etc, is accessible to people, they are able to understand it and appreciate it' - are a great advantage, although they sometimes seem too restrictive: The LDOCE sentence such as A manager should be accessible to his/her staff is not covered by COBUILD, for example.[22]

CRITERION 9: How detailed is the coverage of the patterns of particular entries? On the basis of a comparison of a linguistic description of the valency of over 500 adjectives in English, an attempt was made to compare the coverage of adjective patterns in OALD3 and LDOCE1[23]. This was repeated for a sample 200 adjectives to compare LDOCE2 and COBUILD. The following table distinguishes between prepositional phrases and clauses; the figures on the left refer to the cases which are actually covered by a pattern code, those in brackets on the right to those patterns which are not covered by a code but are illustrated by examples:

	LDOCE2	LDOCE1	OALD3	COBUILD
prepositional patterns	45%(52%)	32%(40%)	21%(40%)	30%(46%)
clause patterns	16%(44%)	10%(20%)	4%(20%)	10%(34%)

These criteria are by no means exhaustive - factors such as the treatment of phrasal and prepositional verbs[24] also have to be considered. Nevertheless, they show that each of these dictionaries has its merits and its drawbacks. From a theoretical point of view the system employed in OALD4 seems most consistent since it only draws upon formal categories, whereas the other two dictionaries mix formal and functional categories. One the other hand, OALD4 suffers from two major drawbacks: Firstly, listing all patterns applicable to a verb meaning right at the beginning of the entry makes it more difficult for the user to correlate them with the examples. Secondly, the codes - despite a certain mnemotechnic design - are relatively difficult to remember. The main problem with a partially transparent coding system also applies in the case of OALD4 - that many users may not even be aware of what type of information the code stands for, ie they may not realize that /Dpr.f/ is information on the complementation possibilities of the verb.

LDOCE2 and COBUILD both overcome this difficulty by using a much more transparent system where there is no danger of the users' not interpreting it as syntactic information. The codes of COBUILD certainly presuppose more familiarity with linguistic analysis (especially with respect to the terminology employed) and in some respects seem unnecessarily complicated. On the whole, - despite certain inconsistencies - the system of LDOCE2 may seem most suitable for the learner, especially also since the codes are closely connected with the examples in the entries. Nevertheless, the suitability of these dictionaries also depends very strongly on the specific target group, its needs and its linguistic background. On the whole, it has to be emphasized that theoretical objections of the kind outlined above should not obscure the fact that each of these dictionaries is an admirable achievement in itself and that all three of them are indications of the progress made in lexicography since the first introduction of verb patterns in learner's dictionaries in the first edition of the OALD.

7 THE NEED FOR A VALENCY DICTIONARY OF ENGLISH

Nevertheless, the discussion of the pattern systems of LDOCE2, OALD4 and COBUILD also shows the limitations of learners' dictionaries in this respect. This is no criticism of the approaches taken but a reflection of the fact that these dictionaries have a wide range of other purposes to serve. This means, for example, that their treatment of complementation must needs suffer from a number of shortcomings, especially with respect to semantic and collocational information (which, if provided in detail, would take up a considerable amount of space); with respect to their function as production dictionaries, at least, the latter factor is not of crucial importance: As long as the learner finds the most common constructions and most common collocations, the dictionary provides an important instrument for production. For the purposes of the teacher who wants to use the dictionary as a marking dictionary, incompleteness of pattern information is of course a much greater drawback. Teachers need to know not only the most frequent constructions but also which other constructions are possible with a particular word (so that they would not mark them wrong).

Thus there is the need for a special dictionary covering grammatical features more extensively than is possible within general learners' dictionaries. One such special dictionary is volume 1 of the Oxford Dictionary of Current Idiomatic English, which deals with the area of phrasal and prepositional verbs. Within this area ODCIE provides a wide range of detailed collocational and pattern information[25]. Since it concentrates on phrasal and prepositional verbs however, ie does not include infinitival or other clause type complements, ODCIE1 cannot be seen as the grammatical dictionary to supplement general learner's dictionaries in the field of complementation[26].

What is thus needed is a dictionary that covers the complementation possibilities of verbs, adjectives and nouns in more detail than existing learner's dictionaries. The most suitable linguistic theory on which such a pattern dictionary could be based is valency theory - since this theory concentrates on the complementation possibilities of words and is closely related to foreign language teaching.[27] While there are a number of valency dictionaries for such languages as German or French, there is as yet no valency dictionary of English.

A Valency dictionary project of English, which is at present being worked on at the universities of Augsburg and Erlangen in Germany and the University of Reading in Great Britain, has the aim of providing a description of the complementation possibilities of a selected number of lexical items which cause problems to the learner. The main principles of this dictionary project can be summarized as follows:

1. The decision on which elements to include as patterns or not is based on criteria developed within valency theory.[28]

2. The description comprises[29]

(a) a level of linguistic form, where pattern elements will be identified on the levels of phrase and clause

(b) a level of semantics, which indicates which semantic features the pattern elements have to fulfill: Wherever possible, general terms will be used, where this is not possible, list of collocates will be given.

(c) a level of examples, at which each pattern identified will be illustrated

3. Where the use of patterns is restricted, this is indicated by a style label to enable the users to distinguish between patterns they should actually use (and, with respect to the function of the marking dictionary, those which are acceptable but not very common or restricted in style or geographical distribution).

4. The symbols used for the description of the patterns must be generally comprehensible without any knowledge of valency theory: Thus, at the semantic level, explicit case grammar labels will be avoided although it is this type of information that will be covered. Similarly, at the syntactic level, no valency terminology will be used but symbols similar to those used in LDOCE2 or OALD4 (N for noun phrase, pron for pronoun, V for verb etc). The basic principle behind this is that the user will not be assumed to use the dictionary often enough to make him familiar with any special terminology.

A typical entry of the projected valency dictionary could then take the following form:[30]

APPLY V
1 to request something, to ask for

N/Pron	+ apply (+ to N/Pron)	+ for N/Pron
PERSON/INSTITUTION	PERSON/INSTITUTION	eg scholarship, job, help

It is hoped that the approach taken will result in a dictionary which can be of use to advanced students of English as a production dictionary and at the same time serve as a marking dictionary for teachers. While the descriptive depth of analysis provided in such a dictionary is naturally much greater than that which can be achieved in general dictionaries it would be an illusion to believe that such a valency dictionary could provide a really comprehensive description of the syntactic features of lexical items. The interdependencies between various grammatical phenomena such as valency patterns, mood and tense of a sentence etc are beyond any lexicographical treatment. This should not stop lexicographers from attempting to achieve an optimum of grammatical information in dictionaries.

FOOTNOTES

[1] *The COD indicates doing in the case of avoid but not the count/uncount uses of whisky.*

[2] *Grammatical information in the dictionary can, of course, also be useful for decoding purposes if, for example, information on complementation helps the learner to identify the meaning of a word in a particular context.*

[3] *A good example of this is the explanation of the code /no comp/on the grammar chart of LDOCE2: "shows that an adjective or adverb is not used in the comparative or superlative form (with -er/-est or more/most)".*

[4] *Cf. Gotz/Herbst (1989).*

[5] *Cf. Heath/Herbst (1985). Compare also Bejoint (1981) and Tomaszczyk (1979). For aspects of user research see also Cowie (1987).*

[6] *It has to be noted that possible spelling difficulties are only indicated in an abbreviated form in OALD3 or LDOCE2, where the problem is indicated: -11- under travel etc.*

[7] *Here, COBUILD also provides more information than LDOCE, where no information about the imperative is given. This, however, seems more predictable from the meaning anyway.*

[8] *This applies equally to the third and fourth editions of OALD.*

[9] *LDOCE, on the other hand, is the only dictionary to indicate systematically that an adjective can occur after a noun phrase as in three metres thick.*

[10] *In the following discussion, the term complementation will be used to refer to valency phenomena. The term pattern element will be used as a neutral term for what in valency theory is termed complements; the term complement is not used here to avoid confusion with the term complement used to refer to an element of clause structure.*

[11] *For discussions of various pattern systems used in EFL dictionaries see eg Standop (1985), Heath (1982 and 1985) or Herbst (1984b). For LDOCE1 see also Stein (1979).*

[12] *For more detailed discussions of this system see Heath (1983), Herbst (1984b), Standop (1985).*

[13] *It must be emphasized that all statements on OALD4 here are made with certain reservations since the dictionary had not appeared at the time of writing. The basis of the discussion in this article is a preprint edition of a few pages of the dictionary (boater to brittle), which was distributed at the FMF Conference in Nurnberg in 1988.*

[14] *In LDOCE1, such verbs were coded as D1 etc.*

[15] *On the basis of the sample available at the time of writing OALD4 cannot be discussed in this respect. OALD3 often makes the distinction clear through such patterns as under apply "(to sb) (for sth).*

[16] *There are cases where OALD4 does not specify the preposition or particle in bold type before the example. It is unclear whether this means that a wide of range of prepositions or particles can be used or only the ones used in the examples: cf: boil (4): "/I, Ip/ ... He was boiling (over) with rage).".*[17] *From a valency theory viewpoint, there is much to be said for not classifying the verb classes at all, as in COBUILD.*

[18] *LDOCE examples.*

[19] *The codes used are /+that/ and /+(that)/.*

[20] Unfortunately, only the prepositions are given in bold type. As far as the retrievability of the information is concerned, it might be desirable to make the patterns before the examples more prominent using bold type.

[21] Since OALD4 has not yet appeared it is possible that it will also contain a similar plastic table.

[22] Cf. Herbst (1989)

[23] Cf. Herbst (1984a).

[24] LDOCE2 uses a double bar (look sthg. <---> up) to indicate that the particle of phrasal verbs can precede or follow a noun phrase, prepositional verbs in CGEL terminology are given without such an arrow (look after). OALD4 indicates the difference by the position of sth; cf: break into sth, break sth off. COBUILD's using codes such as V+PREP and V+ADV (similar to those of LDOCE1) to indicate the difference between phrasal and prepositional verbs again presupposes knowledge of linguistic terminology. Note a code such as V-ERG+ADV under break off (1) in COBUILD.

[25] The fact that ODCIE1's coding system is non-transparent makes the patterns rather difficult to use.

[26] Similarly, the usefulness of a dictionary such as the BBI Combinatory Dictionary of English (1986) is mostly to be seen in the area of general collocation. It is true that BBI contains information on complementation, but it suffers from a number of lexicographical weaknesses such as a non-transparent pattern system, lack of examples and lack of semantic specification of pattern elements. Of. Herbet (1988).

[27] Cf. eg Helbig/Schenkel (1968: 11).

[28] For a discussion of these criteria see Herbst (1987).

[29] Compare the suggestions made by Allerton (1982).

[30] Cf. Herbst (1987: 42)

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THE TREATMENT OF PRONUNCIATION IN SOME (MAINLY BRITISH) MONOLINGUAL GENERAL DICTIONARIES USED BY LEARNERS OF ENGLISH

William R Lee

Few monolingual dictionaries intended mainly for reference or study by teachers of English as a foreign or second language who do not speak English as a first language, and by those of their learners who have undergone some little training in the use of such a dictionary, exclude information on the way or ways in which words, and perhaps even phrases, are pronounced, alongside information on their grammatical functions, their meanings in a range of contexts, and the ways in which they are spelt. What is the model of pronunciation referred to in such dictionaries, and how is this choice justified? How are the pronunciations of individual words indicated? All this is a matter of report, but we may also ask: Is enough information provided, and what more might possibly be done in the future? Since English is now the predominant supplementary world language, we need to take a global view, bearing in mind that the needs and opportunities of users of English vary considerably from one part of the world to another. No exhaustive study is attempted here, but only a sampling of some of the main facts, followed by speculations, suggestions, and a few hopes.

Among the dictionaries examined are: Hornby's The Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English (ALDCE), the Nelson Contemporary English Dictionary (NCED), Chambers Universal Learners Dictionary (CULD) and Chambers Students Dictionary (CSD), the Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English (LDOCE) and the Longman New Universal Dictionary (LNUD), Collins Cobuild English Language Dictionary (CCoELD), The Oxford Guide to the English Language (OGEL), the Reader's Digest Great Illustrated Dictionary (RDGID), the Penguin Wordmaster Dictionary (PWD), the Oxford American Dictionary (OAD), the Winston Dictionary of Canadian English (WDCaE), the Dictionary of Canadian English (DCaE), and the Australian Pocket Oxford Dictionary (AuPOD). (See Bibliography for detail.) These dictionaries are all published in countries generally considered to be English-speaking, since English is spoken there as a first language by the majority of inhabitants, though other 'first languages' are in use on a considerable scale and English is widely spoken also as a second language. Some of the dictionaries referred to are publicized as learners' dictionaries; others are evidently intended for both learners and 'native' speakers.

On what type or types of spoken English do these dictionaries focus? Mainly (and in part of course because of where they are published) on British so-called 'Received Pronunciation'. Let us look at this first. Without going fully into the history of the term, we may notice that Ida Ward, of University College London, used it in 1931 to denote a type of 'educated pronunciation' of English (within the United Kingdom) which had 'lost all easily noticeable local differences'; she added, though without adducing evidence, that this type of speech could 'be considered as that most generally understood throughout the English-speaking world'.[1] Professor Daniel Jones, head of the Phonetics Department at University College before the war, writing of the pronunciation represented in his An English Pronouncing Dictionary (EPD), used 'Received Pronunciation' 'most usually heard in everyday speech in the families of Southern English people who have been educated at the public [ie Private, independent and fee-paying] schools', adding that it was also used by some other people in the south of England who had not been educated at these expensive establishments. He wished it to be understood that RP meant no more than 'widely understood pronunciation' and that he did not 'hold it up as a standard which everyone is recommended to adopt'[2] He did not regard RP as 'better' than other forms of pronunciation, and informed us that he recorded it 'because it happens to be the only type of English pronunciation about which I am in a position to obtain full and accurate information'. '... I do not believe in the feasibility of imposing one particular form of pronunciation on the English-speaking world. I take the view that people should be allowed to speak as they like. And if the public wants a standardized pronunciation, I have no doubt that some appropriate standard will evolve itself. If there are any who think otherwise, it must be left to them to undertake the invidious task of deciding what is to be improved and what is to be condemned.'

The term 'RP' remained when Professor A C Gimson (University College London) made a very thorough revision of the EPD for the currently available edition, published in 1977. 'The speech-style now recorded', wrote Gimson, 'while retaining its South-Eastern English characteristics, is applicable to a wider sample of contemporary speakers, especially those of the middle generations.'[3] He points out in that edition that 'the structure of British society has lost much of its earlier rigidity, so that it has become less easy to define a social class and, consequently, to correlate a certain type of pronunciation exclusively with one section of society.' He drew attention to the exposure of the 'whole population' to RP through broadcasting. Thus ' the original concept of RP' had been weakened, and 'local variants' had to be admitted. Furthermore, 'the young are often influenced nowadays by other prestigious accents, eg Cockney or Mid-Atlantic, whatever their education background.' In addition, not all educated people use RP and not all who use RP can 'safely' be described as 'educated'. Gimson's reasons for retaining the label were that it had 'wide currency in books on present-day English' and was 'a convenient name for an accent which remains generally acceptable and intelligible within *Britain*' (my italics). Falling outside the RP model according to Gimson, is any other phonological system with a different number of phonemes or with different 'qualitative realizations' of its phonemes: thus, under the latter heading, 'Cockney forms [are] sufficiently divergent to be unacceptable in RP'.[4]

The attitude of current monolingual dictionaries of English examined towards a pronunciation model is on the whole briefly and rather vaguely expressed, in many cases with a minimal attempt at justification. The ALDCE, published by OUP in 1974, states: 'The pronunciations we have selected are those which research has suggested are the most common ones or, occasionally, the most suitable from other considerations for adoption by those whose mother tongue is not English', and 'In most cases the pronunciation shown is equally suitable for use with speakers from any part of the English-speaking world, but where this is not so a choice of two forms is given, one representing the best-known variety of British English, the other the best-known variety of American English. These varieties of English pronunciation are the only two which have been adopted widely for the purposes of teaching English as a foreign or second language'. Hornby called them 'General British' (GB) and 'General American' (GA), adding 'In its own country each of them is the variety of English most associated with national broadcasting' (it may surely be questioned whether this is any longer true) 'and least restricted in its geographical distribution'.[5] Another Oxford dictionary, the OGEL, not described as a learners' dictionary, commits itself firmly to RP, 'namely, the pronunciation of that variety of British English widely considered to be least regional, being originally that used by educated speakers in southern England .... This is not to suggest that other varieties are inferior; rather RP is here taken as a neutral national standard, just as it is in its use in broadcasting or in the teaching of English as a foreign language'.[6] In the Dictionary section of the book the pronunciation indicated is said to be 'the standard speech of southern England'.

The LDOCE, too, 'presents the user with all the most important and distinctive differences between British and American usage' and suggests that 'All items that are not labeled British English or American English and carry no other national or regional label may be assumed to be acceptable throughout the world', adding however, 'Care has also been taken to ensure that there is some coverage of words selected from English spoken in other parts of the world. The principal areas covered *where English is the native language* are Australia and New Zealand, Canada, South Africa, and the Caribbean' (my italics). Guidance on British speech rests on RP, 'the kind of English recorded by Daniel Jones in his English Pronouncing Dictionary, which is common among educated speakers in England, although not in most other parts of the British Isles'. An interesting comment is added: 'Indeed, the general speech of both Scotland and Ireland is nearer to the pronunciation.'[8] On American English speech, the guidance is that 'there is no single standard of pronunciation'.[9] 'One of the more common forms of American prounuciation' (not specified) is represented. The Introduction to the LNUD, also from Longman and (like the OGEL) not specifically a learners' dictionary, names among its sources newspapers, journals, and books published in 'Northern England, Ireland, Midlands, South-West England and Wales, Scotland, South-East England, London, Canada, the USA, the West Indies, Australia, and New Zealand.' The pronunciation represented 'is what may be called a "standard" or "neutral British English" accent: the type of speech characteristic of those people often described as having "no accent". A better definition is that it is an accent that betrays nothing of the region to which the speaker belongs.'[10]

Some of the other dictionaries make only brief remarks to justify selection of the model illustrated, CULD venturing no more than a bare mention of RP without description, and adding that differences between RP and the 'particular variety of American English pronunciation' (not named) with which it has been compared in the dictionary are numerous and that a number of them have been indicated.(11) The PWD is equally brief on this matter - 'Pronunciations ... represent the standard speech of British English'(12) - but the NCED, which says it is 'intended to serve the needs of the foreign student learning the language as well as those whose native language is English', unbends to the extent of claiming that the dictionary 'represents English as a living international language, always subject to change and reflecting the scientific and technological advancement of the age'.(13) The CCoELD sticks with RP, 'which is a special type of Southern British English' and 'perhaps most widely used as a norm for teaching purposes'.(14) However, the RDGID boldly takes an independent line: 'Unlike most British dictionaries, this one recognises that there are other acceptable standard accents of English apart from "Received Pronunciation" (Upper and upper-middle class speech that has no regional characteristics)'.(15) Alternative pronunciations 'which do not belong to RP but which are considered standard in a particular region or regions' are indicated (example: laugh (laaf // laf) and often a label is used to indicate 'the country or region' where a particular alternative pronunciation is the one in standard use (example: tomato (tə-maátō // chief U S - máytō); one (wun // N England also won).

Such dictionaries of Australian and Canadian English as I have been able to examine take various attitudes. The WDCE (Intermediate Edition) does not mention RP and says very little in general terms about the model except that it is 'English as generally spoken in Canada' and that Canadian English 'has roughly 40 distinguishable sounds': these are listed with word examples.(16) The WDCE and the DCE are intended mainly for Canadian users, and the latter is explicit that Canadian English, while different from both British and American English, is in large measure a blend of both varieties, and to this blend must be added many features which are typically Canadian: examples are given. 'But surely the proper test of correctness for Canadians,' says the Preface to the Senior version of the dictionary 'should be the language of educated natives of Canada'.[17]

With the AuPOD, based on the Pocket Oxford Dictionary of Current English (originally edited by F G and H W Fowler) we are back again with RP, 'the educated speech of southern England', Australian variations of which are listed. 'But the differences, in terms of meaning and mutual comprehension are not so great as to render the indications of pronunciation ... either misleading or irrelevant. Some of the differences are characteristics of connected speech, such as sentence stress, intonation, and tone: these lie outside the scope of a dictionary, which is concerned with the pronunciation of single words'. The AuPOD distinguishes two or three styles of pronunciation, which, the dictionary bluntly says, are 'not regional, but due to education, wealth, and other social factors'. An important additional point made is that 'most of the differences between Australian pronunciation - any variety of it - and RP are phonetic differences, not phonemic. This means that the pronunciation indicated ..., although based on RP, also holds good for Australian English. An Australian may pronounce his (v) with a different phonetic quality from that of the speaker of RP, but the difference is not so great as to produce a difference of meaning ...'[18] (We return to this point below.)

Before discussing a number of major considerations which seem to emerge from the above short survey of the models of English prounuciation recommended, or at least presented, by certain well-know monolingual dictionaries, let us look briefly at the ways in which they indicate the pronunciation of words and, in some instances, phrases.

There is a major cleavage between adoption of (a) International Phonetic Association (IPA) symbols and (b) a system which dispenses with phonetic symbols and makes use of letters having a regular one-to-one correspondence with English phonemes (the so-called 're-spelling' system). In general the dictionaries intended for other-language speakers learning English use (a), while dictionaries intended largely for native speakers of English use (b).

However, not all dictionaries use the same version of the IPA representation of the sounds of English. Some (like LDOCE, CCoELD, PWD, and CULD) make use of length-marks for certain vowels, while others (ALDCE in particular) do not. The symbols themselves, also, differ to some extent (for instance, I and i for the vowel sound in sit, e and ɛ as in get, a: and a: as in father, and 3 and as in fur), and the same applies to certain diphthongs (eg əʊ and ou; aɪ, ai, and ɑɪ; eə and ɛə , əɪ and oi). WDCaE uses doubled letters (eg ii, uu) for some of the 'long' vowels. The symbols for the consonant sounds do not vary, except that WDCaE uses č, š, and ž for the initial sounds in chest and shut and the medial consonant in measure.

Similarly with the 're-spelling' system, which differs considerably from one dictionary to another. Some use diacritics; for instance. DCE has a (as in hat), ā (ace), ã (care), and ä (barn). RDGID uses diacritics and doubled letters, as well as IPA/ə/. Among the symbols used by CSD for accented syllables are ā (as in fate, a (sat), ä (father), ē (me), ī (mine), ö (all), o͞o (moon), o͝o (foot), ū (mute), u (bud), û (bird), and for unaccented syllables the following: ȧ (signal), ė (moment), i (perish), ȯ (abbot), u̇ (circus); here all but the i in perish could be indicated by a single IPA symbol, /ə/. Only NCED uses both an IPA and a 're-spelling' system, the latter with a few diacritics (ä, as in air; ī, arise; ō, old; o͞o, moon, and ū, tune, IPA /juː/.

In the IPA-using dictionaries primary and secondary word-stress are indicated by superscript and subscript marks, as in /ˌkɒmprɪˈhensəbl/, and brief information is also given on possible stress-shifts in continuous speech.

CONCLUSION, SUGGESTIONS, GUESSES, HOPES

(1) Generalisation on the basis of a limited number of dictionaries should be cautious, although some of those examined are in widespread use all over the world. Predominantly the model is, or is said to be, Received Pronunciation. However, RP is variously and often very sketchily defined, sometimes from one viewpoint and sometimes from another. Definitions of the type 'the pronunciation of English described by Daniel Jones' are the most definite. But Jones himself refrained from recommending any type and took the view that 'people should be allowed to speak as they like'. Nevertheless, and especially if for them English is a foreign or second language, people look to dictionaries as one, but not the only, source of guidance.

During the whole of this century, RP has been defined with reference mainly, or even solely, to Britain, with the emphasis on the whole (for historical reasons not explained in the dictionaries themselves) both socially and geographically placed: on speakers, proportionately few and inevitably from well-to-do families, who have received a particular type of education (at fee-paying 'public' schools) or who have been brought up in the south-east of England. With the big social changes which have taken place in Britain and elsewhere, particularly since the First World War, the social emphasis has broadened, and is now placed on 'education' rather than social class. Yet neither emphasis is firm or clearly explained. The term 'educated people' is often used to describe those who speak RP, but not one of the dictionaries attempts to define 'education': is the term indefinable? A C Gimson, indeed, as Jones's successor, took the view, as we have seen, that not all educated first-language speakers of English speak RP and that not all RP speakers are educated (Jones and Gimson, 1977). Does this view recognise that there are degrees of education and also that these are associated with success in climbing the educational ladder? Probably not the second.

'Education' can be defined in many ways, but surely it is difficult to define 'educated speech' if not all RP users (or users of some other specific kind of pronunciation) are considered educated. There seems to be a circularity here from which one cannot escape. The solution is to drop the criterion 'educated' as essential to the definition of RP.

(2) What then is RP if not (a) one of the most widely intelligible spoken dialects of English used in Britain, and (b) one of the most widely intelligible dialects of English used outside Britain? But how is wide intelligibility estimated, and what convincing research data demonstrate the outstanding intelligibility of what is still called RP? Research on the mutual intelligibility of types of spoken English, world-wide as well as within Britain, still has a long way to go. Moreover, intelligibility is deeply affected by aspects of speech other than pronunciation, eg grammatical and lexical coherence.

(3) Broadcasting is said to have been influential in familiarising people with RP. As far as Britain goes, there is a great deal of truth in this. But the familiarisation undoubtedly extends to other styles and dialects of English, and particularly to the 'accents' of numerous regular broadcasters, whose speech, fluent and perfectly intelligible though it very often is, may well reflect the part of Britain or region of the world in which they were brought up. To some extent the people of Britain (and of other countries) have got to know one another by hearing how English is spoken in parts of Britain they have never visited, and have got to know the world by hearing how non-British people use English.

(4) Although RP is somewhat vaguely defined and the dictionaries concerned make no very strenuous attempt to justify its adoption as a world-wide pronunciation model for learners of English, it has been fairly fully described, and thus there is a detailed basis for systematic teaching of this type of speech. This is doubtless one reason why it has made its way in the world, but there are other possible reasons, among them that those who compile dictionaries and other language teaching material come on the whole from those geographical areas and social strata where RP is most spoken, and that the same kind of people travel more and take up employment outside Britain more than other people; however, it is doubtful whether this remains true, now that travel and the taking up of employment outside Britain have become so general. Other accents of English have so far been much less thoroughly described. The description of RP is reflected in the way words are represented by phonetic symbols in well-known dictionaries and also course-books. Fortunately, however, phonetic ('narrow') transcriptions are rarely used in such material, and phonemic ('broad') transcriptions are the rule. As the AuPOD points out, with references to the differences between Australian English and RP, this is an advantage when, as in Australia, 'the differences, in terms of meaning and mutual comprehension, are not so great as to render the indications of pronunciation ... either misleading or irrelevant'. This argument has application also to English in the world as a whole. A

broad transcription of vowel sounds, for example, allows for different vowel 'qualities' (closer/more open, more advanced/more retracted, with differing lip positions) in different types of speech. It is only where the number of phonemic oppositions is not the same that some difficulty arises and where more descriptive research is required.

(5) Plenty of information about RP and Hornby's 'General British', which appears to be very similar if not identical, is available in the EFL course-books and teachers' books, and in the form of recordings of continuous speech. It is strange that the information available from the dictionaries, with one exception (as far as those examined are concerned), is only printed (ie silent) information. The exception is the ALDCE, which is accompanied by An English Pronunciation Companion, consisting of a book and a cassette tape: phrasal and sentence stressing, the use of weak forms, and differences between British and American speech are all illustrated. More of this kind of help seems desirable, both for learners who wish to communicate orally using RP and those who do not see any pressing reason for wanting to do so in that accent. It would be helpful to listen to recordings not only of typical and exceptional words but also of continuous speech.

Minimally, serious students of English as an international means of oral communication, as it is almost universally today, should also be able to listen to continuous speech (for instance, to reading aloud, dialogues, and conversation) in the style of speech they are trying to learn, and a tape to enable them to do so could be provided as an accompaniment to a medium-sized learners' dictionary. Ideally, such students should be able to acquire, with the help of a tape or two, some familiarity with a number of accents of English widely intelligible in the world. This would assist them, by opening their eyes as well as their ears to the main varieties of English, to overcome any insularity or 'regionalism' from which they might suffer and to realise more clearly the possibilities of English as a universal means of communication, complementing the resources of their own first languages. It would also help them in a more narrowly practical way, especially if they are likely to mix with speakers of various types of English in their own countries or during travel abroad, to 'tune in' more readily to the English they meet with.

Especially conspicuous by its absence from learners' dictionaries is guidance on intonation, but surely (along with stress) this aspect of speech is just as important to the conveyance and understanding of meaning as 'sounds', in any narrow sense of this term. Tape illustration of major features of intonation seems essential. I would guess that in the not distant future learners' dictionaries will begin to provide this.

(6) Undeniably there is a danger of confusion in providing too much information, whether to learners or teachers. Not every learner needs to know how English is pronounced all over the world, although many more millions than fifty

years ago will, so to speak, be rubbing shoulders with people from a variety of countries and will find English to be the only way of communicating with them otherwise than by gestures. Even at an elementary level it seems advisable to expose learners to more than one kind of voice and style of speech, however simple the oral exchanges of which they are capable. At an advanced level, it is part of the definition of being advanced that easy communicative exchange with users of more than one type of English becomes possible.

What have dictionary-makers in mind in providing learners of English with guidance of one kind or another on English speech? That they themselves should speak in the way suggested or that they should be able to understand others who speak in that way? No doubt both, although little or no discussion of this point is to be found in the dictionaries themselves. It would appear unreasonable to expect speakers of other languages to learn to speak English in more than one way, although in some learning environments it is not unduly difficult to do so. Normally they will learn to speak in only one way, and will consult their dictionaries for guidance on that, whether it be so-called Received Pronunciation or some other style, such as that of the generally accepted and successfully (even if only locally) communicative English of West Africa or South India or Southeast Asia. Oral communication, however, does not depend solely on success in speaking but also on success in listening, and it is for the latter's sake that, in the world of today and tomorrow, information about 'accents' of English other than one uses oneself that reliable guidance on these and listening experience of them is desirable.

What notice of the 'new Englishes' is taken by most of the big learners' dictionaries? Very little so far.

(7) For learners of English at a comparatively elementary level there would be some advantage if dictionaries used a single version of the IPA script, preferably that which employs both length-marks and different symbols for different vowel phonemes. Not that the length-marks are all that useful, when we know that so-called 'long' vowels can be shorter in certain commonly occurring speech-contexts than so-called 'short' vowels in certain other common speech-contexts. And admittedly even a slow learner can master, for recognition purposes, and with a good tutor's help, four or five variant IPA systems within an easy-going hour. But if 're-spelling' systems - apt to mislead elementary and intermediate learners of English - could be dropped, so many more otherwise good dictionaries would lie more open for learners to consult. I would guess that, in any case, IPA transcription, which is flexible enough to cope with varieties of English and is easy to consult, will prevail.

(8) Finally, it is strange that RP has sometimes not only been in part defined but also, it seems, by implication recommended for its 'neutrality' (eg by Ward[19]) and by the OGEL, which speaks of 'an accent that betrays nothing of the region to which the speaker belongs'[20]. By contrast, the RDGID and

LDOCE try to represent other standard accents also. It is hard to understand why speakers should wish, and even be encouraged, to acquire a style of pronunciation which conceals their origins and upbringing, as if they were something to be ashamed of. Scholars have drawn attention to the dangers of too great a divergence between one area's English and another's (see, for instance, Quirk, 1982, 38), but extreme measures do not need, and undoubtedly cannot, be taken to diminish the chance of spoken English breaking up into nothing but mutually unintelligible dialects, thus destroying English as a world-wide means of spoken communication. The extreme measure would be the pursuit of RP, or General American, or any other type of pronunciation, with the aim of getting every speaker of English to adopt it. This would be Operation Overkill, and kill it probably would - by diminishing interest and motivation, and by causing some resentment. Flat 'neutrality' is not essential to effective communication. What *is* essential is mutual intelligibility, and this is a reasonable, practicable, and necessary goal. Intelligibility is not of course a matter of pronunciation alone, nor is an RP speaker (or a speaker of General American or of *any* other type) necessarily very intelligible. On the other hand, speakers may be admirable and widely intelligible and yet clearly reveal by small characteristics of their pronunciation of English the country or area from which they come - the Arab world, Greece, Russia, Portuguese South America, Japan, or wherever it may be.

More toleration is needed, a friendlier attitude towards other people's ways of speaking English. At the same time, a determination to avoid, or to eliminate from one's own speech, features of pronunciation which may diminish one's general intelligibility in the community of speakers of both second-language and first-language English, which now pervades almost all parts of the world, is equally necessary. What features are they? We do not altogether know. Sociolinguistic research has an important practical role to play in establishing them, and the concept of 'nuclear' English (see, in particular, Quirk, 1982, pp 42-53, and also Smith, ed. 1981) may have some relevance outside the grammar of English: that remains to be seen.

Meanwhile, we who are interested in teaching or learning English as a supplementary and international spoken language have some very good dictionaries to help us along our way, and we can surely look forward to further and various developments. A H King (1949) was well ahead of his time in writing: 'I shall be content if the principles are found acceptable that priorities of correctness and correction in pronunciation and syntax should be determined by comprehensibility ... Correctness is less important than fluency in speech and writing, *provided the fluency is comprehensible* ...'21) (my italics). Daniel Jones's dictum, previously quoted, 'I take the view that people should be allowed to speak as they like', remains valid also and has broad implications. However, if they speak as they like, without regard for general intelligibility, they may not be understood by as many other speakers as they might be or indeed may themselves find these speakers intelligible.

FOOTNOTES

[1] *Ward (1931), pp. 6-7*

[2] *See, for instance, the Preface to the 4th edition (1937) of the English Pronouncing Dictionary.*

[3] *Jones and Gimson (1977), p. vii.*

[4] *Ditto, pp. x-xi.*

[5] *Hornby (1974), p. xii.*

[6] *Weiner and Hawkins (1984), p. 45.*

[7] *Procter and others (1978), pp. ix.*

[8] *Ditto, p. xvii.*

[9] *Ditto, p. xviii.*

[10] *Procter and Ayto (1982), p. xxi.*

[11] *Kirkpatrick (1980), p. xix.*

[12] *Manser and Turton (1987), p. x.*

[13] *Cunningham and Thompson (1977), p. vii.*

[14] *Sinclair (1987), p. xii.*

[15] *Ilson, Crystal, Long, Wells (1984), P. 8.*

[16] *Paikeday (1969), p. xiv.*

[17] *Avis (1967), inside front cover and p. xiv.*

[18] *Johnston (1967), pp. xvi, xxi-xxiii.*

[19] *Ward (1931), pp. 6(foot)-7(line 1).*

[20] *Weiner and Hawkins (1984), p.*

[21] *King (1949), p. 36.*

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HOW MANY WORDS IS A PICTURE WORTH? A REVIEW OF ILLUSTRATIONS IN DICTIONARIES

Hilary Nesi

Some English language learners are working on a text. They do not recognise one of the words - and its meaning is not recoverable from context. They turn to you for help:
"Please, what is this word, PINEAPPLE?"

If you decide to satisfy their curiosity, four choices are open to you. Would you prefer to:

(i) Translate the word into their language?
(ii) Ask them to consult a dictionary?
(iii) Give your own, off-the-cuff gloss?
(iv) Show them a picture of a pineapple?

Much, of course, would depend on the nature of the text and the task. I think, however, that most teachers would favour option (iv). Showing a picture of a pineapple would provide the required information as effectively as a translation, but more "directly", and it would normally be more economical in terms of time and less disruptive of the reading or listening process than giving a written or spoken definition.

Using realia in the classroom is now standard practice, influenced by the Direct Method which advocates that meanings should be associated directly with the target language by means of "actions, objects, mime, gestures and situations" (Richards, et al 1985). However, although this belief has paved the way to a more communicative approach to language learning, now generally espoused, it may be impossible to establish conclusively that vocabulary learned "directly" is more easily, or better learnt than that learnt by other means. In studies by Kellog and Howe (1971), and Webber (1978), learners had better recall of pictured words than of those whose meaning was presented verbally. But other studies have found no advantage to learning words through pictures: Hammerly (1974), for example, found that subjects who were introduced to a word through a picture often misinterpreted the meaning of the word.

Vocabulary learning through pictures meets with varying degrees of success because learners themselves vary - some people visualize vocabulary more than others - and also because some meanings are easier to illustrate, and some pictures are clearer and more memorable. As language teachers we would be unwise to rely on any one method of vocabulary glossing to the exclusion of all others, and in the case of the picture gloss this would clearly be impossible, as many words are not "picturable" at all. However, pictures are undoubtedly useful for conveying certain kinds of information, and on occasion provide the perfect gloss for an unknown word.

In recent years the makers of learners' dictionaries have been using pictures increasingly both as substitutes for and as supplements to the verbal definition. To make the best use of this alternative defining technique, we should be attempting to answer certain basic questions:

What kind of words can best be explained by means of an illustration?
What kind of illustrations are most suitable for expressing the meanings of words?
And, with reference to the organization of illustrated dictionaries, how can picture definitions be stored and accessed?

Let us begin by looking at the places where picture definitions can be found.

DICTIONARIES WITH ILLUSTRATIONS

The belief in the value of direct association between word and object in language learning can be traced back to early lexicographers who provided pictures of the words they glossed. Comenius, the seventeenth century educator and word-book writer, used detailed illustrations as a focus for each section of his book *Orbis sensualium pictus* (The Illustrated World of Things we can Feel), and to some extent anticipated the "direct" approach:

> "Comenius considered that clearly delineated sense impressions lay at the heart of all sound learning and as a consequence emphasized the value of visual help" (McArthur, 1988)

The items in Comenius' illustrations, however, were correlated to numbered words in accompanying German and Latin texts, thereby permitting a three-way translation between the two languages and the image, something which proponents of the Direct Method would never have tolerated.

Since Comenius' day many other dictionary writers have made use of illustrations to gloss words. In Germany the Duden series adopted Comenius' idea of matching numbered drawings to numbered world-lists, although his dual-language approach has not been developed. Some of the earliest English dictionaries were also illustrated, for example Nathaniel Bailey's *Universal Etymo-*

logical Dictionary of the English Language (1731), but Johnson's dictionary of 1755 did not contain pictures, and as the gap between British and American lexicography grew the illustrated dictionary became primarily an American institution. American English dictionaries had to cater for the vast numbers of non-English-speaking immigrants who were entering the country, and this encouraged the use of illustrations (Whitehall, 1971), but British dictionary makers were reluctant to include pictures in their serious works of reference (Ilson, 1986).

Although a number of native-speaker illustrated dictionaries have been published in Britain in recent years, notably *The Oxford Illustrated Dictionary* (first published 1962) and *The Reader's Digest Great Illustrated Dictionary* (1984), the most important British publications as far as dictionary illustrations are concerned have been learners' dictionaries: *The Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary* (first published 1948) and three volumes from Longman, the *Dictionary of Contemporary English* (1978, 1987), *Lexicon of Contemporary English* (1981), and *Active Study Dictionary* (1983). (At the compilation stage, Collins COBUILD dictionary was also expected to have illustrations, but this idea was dropped before publication.

In this decade a number of picture dictionaries have also been published. Some of these are explicitly intended for language learners, for example the *Heinemann Picture Dictionary* (1987) the *Longman Photo Dictionary* (1987) and *The New Oxford Picture Dictionary* (1988). Others have been written for native and non-native speakers alike, such as the *Visual Dictionary* (1988), and *The Oxford-Duden Pictorial English Dictionary* (1981).

One essential difference between the dictionary for learners and that intended for native speakers is that the learner's dictionary provides explanations of words the learner already knows in his native language, whereas the native speaker usually uses his dictionary to discover new meanings. Thus under PINEAPPLE the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (intended for native speakers) supplies the fruit's botanical name and etymology, whereas COBUILD provides a definition to match the learner's existing knowledge of the fruit: "a pineapple is a large oval fruit that is sweet, juicy, and yellow inside and is covered with a thick, hard, woody skin".

The target reader is also a deciding factor in the choice of items to illustrate in dictionaries. The preface to the *Oxford Illustrated Dictionary*, for example, (intended for native speakers) states that "very familiar words" will not be illustrated. It does not include an illustration of a pineapple, and those fruits which are illustrated are chosen as representatives of botanical types, and are shown in cross-section to display features of specialist interest. The illustrated learners' dictionaries, on the other hand, all display a range of common fruit without technical detail. Thus there is not a great degree of overlap between the illustrations in dictionaries intended for native and non-native use, the native-speaker dictionaries tending to illustrate the unfamiliar, incorporating technical terms which are not defined at all in the learners' dictionaries.

Comprehensive pictorial dictionaries such as the *Oxford-Duden* and the *Visual Dictionary* cover familiar and unfamiliar objects alike. In *The Oxford-Duden*, for example, the pineapple is illustrated in one part of the book in a supermarket context, together with other commestibles, and in another part of the book as a botanical specimen. Such books have by far the widest selection of illustrated items - over 25,000 as compared to 1000 in the *Longman Lexicon* and the *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary*, and although they are not intended as substitutes for the more conventional dictionaries *(The Oxford-Duden* is advertised as "an essential complement to any dictionary of English"), in fact many of the terms listed in *The Oxford-Duden* and the *Visual Dictionary* are not to be found in other word-books. By doing away with the verbal definition these dictionaries solve the problem that plagues ordinary learners' dictionaries: the problem that a learner, having looked up a word, cannot always read what it means. However, the absence of pronunciation and grammar guides, style and register "labels", and examples of use could lead the unwary pictorial dictionary user to make serious production errors.

The purely pictorial dictionaries are to be distinguished from the illustrated dictionaries not only by the absence of verbal commentary, but also by their thematic as opposed to alphabetical organization. To a certain extent all word-books which include labelled illustrations must depart from strict alphabetical ordering of items, but whereas the user of an illustrated dictionary starts by finding the alphabetical entry for the word, and may then be referred to another page for the picture, the user of a pictorial dictionary can begin his search in the "conceptual area" that interests him. This certainly sounds perfect for the productive language learner. With an alphabetically arranged dictionary, it is not possible to look up a word without knowing it already. Indeed, to consult most dictionaries effectively it is necessary to know how to spell at least the first few letters of the word, despite the fact that one of the major roles of the dictionary for both native-speakers and learners is that of a spelling-checker (Barnhart, 1962; Bejoint, 1981). (Shaky spellers will find the Longman *Active Study Dictionary* an exception in providing spelling notes). In contrast, the learner who cannot spell or does not even know the word he is looking for can use a thematically organised dictionary as long as he knows the semantic field the word belongs to.

Searching via semantic area is fine in theory but may be problematic in practice, both because the generic terms used for the different areas of the dictionary are often difficult words in themselves, and less common than many of the terms which are illustrated, and because many common items belong to not one but several semantic fields. The learner who can visualize a pair of goggles, for example, and needs to know their name, must first find the right thematic area in the table of contents. In the case of *The Oxford-Duden* this would be "Trades, Craft and Industry" or "Recreation, Games, Sport", whereas "Tools and Equipment" would be the correct part of the *Visual Dictionary*. From there it is necessary to identify the correct subsection: "Metalworker" and "Winter Sports" in *The Oxford-Duden*, "Soldering and welding" in the *Visual Dictionary*. The user of the *Visual Dictionary* has a further subsection to identify in order to find "goggles" on the "Protective Clothing" page, and there are three double page spreads of winter sports for users of *The Oxford-Duden* to pore over. In neither dictionary are themes or subsections listed alphabetically; items are grouped into categories and no further order is imposed, thus entailing a skim-read through eighty-three subsections of "Recreation, Games, Sport" in *The Oxford-Duden* to find "Winter Sports", the fiftieth item.

All this makes it very difficult for the user to access GOGGLES by semantic field alone. The task is, in fact, virtually impossible if the user had a swimming-pool or motor-bike context in mind. Searches are probably most successful where the item clearly belongs within only one semantic field. It is much easier to find VIOLIN, for example (under "Music", "Stringed Instruments" in the *Visual Dictionary*") than it is to find GUSSET (which is listed under "Personal Articles", "Handbags").

Searches are also easier for the users of the less comprehensive learners' pictorial dictionaries, where there are fewer semantic areas to choose between and no subsections. Nevertheless those intended for adults require the user to recognize a formidable array of superordinates: *The New Oxford Picture Dictionary* has eighty-three categories, some of which are labelled with relatively rare words which are in themselves difficult to define, such as "Treatments and Remedies"; The *Longman Photo Dictionary* has ninety-two such categories.

It is difficult to see how semantic categorization can be made any easier for the learner, however, without reducing the coverage of the dictionary. The greater the number of items covered by a category, the more abstract the title of that category must become, yet the user will find his item easier to locate if the number of categories is relatively small. As the titles of categories vary considerably from dictionary to dictionary, the best advice for the learner is to get to know the conventions of a particular dictionary before looking up a picture to find a word.

All the pictorial dictionaries I have mentioned also offer a second means of entry: that of looking up a word to find a picture. Words can be located in an alphabetically ordered word-list, as with a conventional dictionary, which refers the user to another part of the book for the appropriate illustration. The procedure is more time-consuming than look-up in a conventional dictionary, and the search may be prolonged if a word appears more than once. A STOP, for example, is illustrated in five separate places in both *The Oxford-Duden* and the

Visual Dictionary, and the only alternative to accessing each one in turn involves knowledge of the titles given to semantic categories.

Conceptually organized dictionaries may seem to be more trouble than they are worth for the non-native speaker, but they come into their own when they are used for vocabulary learning rather than for quick reference. Research in psycholinguistics suggests that "individuals tend to recall words according to the semantic fields in which they are conceptually mapped" (Carter, 1987), and the user of a pictorial dictionary or a word-book such as the *Longman Lexicon of Contemporary English* is presented with just what he needs to help him remember: groups of semantically linked words. Teachers often jokingly talk of the misguided student who sets himself the task of learning pages from the dictionary, but with a conceptually organized dictionary this ceases to be ridiculous, indeed it is possible to use such a dictionary as a basis for vocabulary lessons, as the work-book accompanying the *Heinemann Picture Dictionary* demonstrates.

Ordinary illustrated dictionaries are also a resource for language learning if the illustrations group words meaningfully rather than according to their alphabetical form. The *Longman Active Study Dictionary* actually provides sentences and passages to contextualize many of the items illustrated, but teachers and learners will find further ways of exploiting dictionary pictures. Work on American and British English usage, for example, could be aided by reference to the *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English* illustrations, or those in the *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary*, where both forms appear together.

Both not all words are "picturable". Although there are many words in conventional dictionaries which would benefit from a picture gloss, there are also many words in pictorial dictionaries which are not adequately defined by illustrations alone. We need to know which these words are.

WHAT KIND OF WORDS ARE "PICTURABLE"?

When the "basic English" vocabulary list was developed in the 1930's it was meant to provide learners with 850 words which would act as a basic minimum for communication. Of these, 200 words were counted as "picturable", and the designers intended that they should be learnt by reference to illustrations (Richards 1943). The learning task was supposed to be easy, but in practice it was found that learners needed to view far more than 200 illustrations, because many of the 200 words were polysemous, as common words often are.

Teachers and learners have to cope with polysemy if they choose to work with verbal definitions too, of course, but in an alphabetically ordered dictionary the various meanings of a word are listed side by side. When illustrated dictionaries label items there is a real danger of assuming that item and word are identical, as a labelled picture supplies only one meaning for each word, and the learner may not be made aware of any others. Perhaps this is a more "natural" way of encountering new vocabulary; outside the dictionary language users rarely negotiate more than one meaning of a word at once. However it is also possible to build new meanings upon old ones if all the meanings of a word are presented together; learning the words for a SADDLE of lamb or a satellite DISH, for example, may be easier if the learner is reminded of the more familiar meanings of these terms.

In a discussion of the nature of "picturable" words, therefore, one of the first things to note is that polysemous words should be treated with special care, particularly if illustrations will be accessed for receptive use. Common concrete nouns, the most obvious candidates for picture-glossing, are often polysemous, and sometimes have a secondary meaning which is not picturable at all, or a figurative use in idioms and fixed expressions.

Traditionally the illustrated items in dictionaries have always been concrete nouns. Illustrated dictionaries for native-speakers, and the two more comprehensive pictorial dictionaries previously discussed, *The Oxford-Duden* and the *Visual Dictionary*, all concentrate on words for objects. So does the *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary*, but some of the more recent learners' dictionaries have been branching out to illustrate other parts of speech. In addition to nouns, selected verbs, adjectives and prepositions are illustrated in the three pictorial dictionaries designed specifically for learners: the *Longman Photo Dictionary*, the *Heinemann Picture Dictionary* and *The New Oxford Picture Dictionary*. The *Longman Lexicon* uses diagrams to express adjectives, adverbs and prepositions of location, the *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English* illustrates some verbs and the occasional adjective (such as ABSTRACT and GEOMETRIC), and the *Longman Active Study Dictionary* contains pictures of verbs, prepositions and adjectives of comparison.

Word class is, in fact, unimportant when assessing how "picturable" a word will be. Within each class it is possible to illustrate some words but not others, and even within each semantic field certain words are "picturable" and others less so. EXPENSIVE, for example, is easier to illustrate than IMPORTANT, and a picture of a LEXICOGRAPHER or even of a LECTURER is more open to misinterpretation than a picture of a NURSE. Illustrated dictionaries provide pictures of just a few words, and give verbal definitions for words which cannot easily be distinguished visually, but the more comprehensive pictorial dictionaries make the mistake of trying to illustrate a wide range of items within the same semantic field, regardless of their individual suitability. The *Longman Dictionary*, for example, pictures fifteen instantly recognisable items under the headword FRUIT; the *Visual Dictionary* illustrates many more, but some, such as the BLUEBERRY, HUCKLEBERRY and CRANBERRY, are impossible to distinguish in black and white (while the pictures of a FRUIT LOAF and a FRUIT FLAN are decidedly uninformative).

It is because of the difficulty of comprehensively illustrating a complete semantic area that the larger pictorial dictionaries ignore adjectives, verbs and prepositions. Only a few of the words in each of these classes can be considered as "picturable", although the number is continually rising as new dictionaries find new ways to illustrate meanings. Adjectives, when they are illustrated, are usually presented in terms of opposites (LIGHT/HEAVY, OPEN/CLOSED etc) or in comparative sentences (for example "Peter is TALLER than David"), but the *Longman Photo Dictionary* has had some limited success glossing "emotional adjectives" such as DETERMINED, PROUD and SMUG with photographs of different facial expressions. Illustrations of prepositions tend to contextualize a number of words in one scene - a street scene in the *Longman Active Study Dictionary*, miniature golf course and playful kittens in the living room in *The New Oxford Picture Dictionary*. Such treatments are remarkably successful at conveying the base meanings of AWAY FROM, ALONG, BEHIND and so on, although a verbal definition is necessary, of course, for more figurative senses. Dictionary illustrations of selected verbs also work well. In the learners' pictorial dictionaries and the *Longman Active Study Dictionary* pictures are provided for the commoner verbs of motion such as DIVE, CATCH, PULL, but the *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English* has demonstrated that more unusual words, such as DIFFUSE, GUIDE and TWIST, can also be explained neatly by a picture.

It seems likely that we will be seeing more and more words glossed by pictures in dictionaries of the future. Success depends on the skill of the lexicographer, who may break new ground by choosing to illustrate words previously considered "unpicturable", and it also depends to a large extent on the skill of the illustrator, whose job it is to inform in a very specific way. Lexicographer and illustrator must work together , to decide which visual features are essential to an understanding of the meaning of the word, and which features need to be downplayed.

ILLUSTRATIONS WHICH DEFINE

Although an attractive illustration is a bonus in any book, it is clearly not the first consideration when designing illustrations for dictionaries. Perhaps more surprisingly, dictionary illustrations usually need not, and often should not, be very realistic. In many semantic areas a diagram providing a model of reality is preferable to a faithful representation; in a line drawing of a cross-section of an eye, for example, the component parts are far more easily identifiable than they would be in a photograph. Diagrams have long been used to gloss new words in text-books for the sciences, and most dictionary users are already familiar with their conventions.

Realistic illustrations often provide too many irrelevant details. To express the generic sense of words such as WHALE or DOG, for example, a very simple drawing is appropriate. The alternative to the outline sketch is a number of more detailed pictures, an approach which some dictionaries intended for adult users adopt, perhaps because a cartoon-like illustration appears insufficiently serious. The *Oxford Illustrated Dictionary* thus illustrates a WHALE with realistic representations of a SPERM WHALE, NARWHAL and SIBBALD'S RORQUAL, and the *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary* has pictures of six different breeds under DOG.

Too much detail can also be misleading where illustrations are used to distinguish between lexical items. In the *Longman Photo Dictionary*, for example, the illustration for the LONG shows a girl with long *straight* hair, while next to it the illustration for SHORT shows a girl with short *curly* hair. Photographs for a photo dictionary must be chosen very carefully, the worst ones show everyday people in everyday scenes, but draw the attention to non-essential features: the best ones tend to have a theatrical quality which makes them quite unlike the snapshots in your family album. In two of the more successful pictures in the *Longman Photo Dictionary* an actor exaggeratedly clutches himself to indicate a STOMACHACHE, and a range of emotions are illustrated by mime-artists with whited faces.

Even when a picture gloss is highly stylized, however, the problem of irrelevant detail is never entirely solved. No matter how simple the illustration of, say, a CARDIGAN, the dictionary user will still have to deduce its distinguishing features from a number of plausible alternatives: length, material, style, or even colour. Even several pictures of cardigans might not conclusively prove to the user what a CARDIGAN is or is not, something which a verbal definition can easily do: "a cardigan is a knitted jacket which is fastened up the front with buttons or a zip" (COBUILD). Pictures also inevitably carry the stamp of the time and place where they were created. A verbal definition of a COAT, or a MOTOR CAR, for example, ages far less quickly than a picture does, and whereas verbal definitions of institutions and occupations do not specify the nationality of the people involved, it is often impossible for the artist or photographer to avoid some indication of geographical location. Many of the illustrations in recently published dictionaries already look quaint and old-fashioned; they also reflect a western life-style - American or British in most cases, but distinctly German in the case of *The Oxford-Duden*.

There are times, however, when the user needs the kind of information which a realistic colour picture or photograph can provide. An outline drawing is sufficient to identify a PINEAPPLE, but a much more realistic picture is needed to distinguish between a PEACH and a NECTARINE, for example. Moreover, although dictionary makers may try to avoid it, not all users will object to the cultural orientation of dictionary illustrations: the views of London in the *Longman*

Photo Dictionary, for example, may add to the dictionary's appeal. Detailed pictures can be useful precisely because they convey a sense of time and place, and are ideal for glossing items alien to the dictionary user's culture, such as a different type of cooking utensil, and items from the past such as a CARRIAGE or different types of SWORD.

From the above discussion it should be clear that different types of word suit different types of illustration. One rule remains a constant, however: all items illustrated should be large enough to see, and labelled in such a way that there is no likelihood of confusion between items. For this reason the practice of labelling the illustration directly, as the illustrated dictionaries do, is probably preferable to the Duden practice of relating numbers to a word list. *The Oxford-Duden* can name seventy or more items by numbering a full page illustration, but it is easy for the user to make a mismatch, and some of the illustrated items are so tiny that they are only barely identifiable.

Dictionary illustrations vary in quality, but standards seem to be improving, and the most recent dictionary illustrations are much sharper and clearer than the rather fuzzy pictures in the pioneering *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary*.

CONCLUSIONS

At the beginning of this paper a teaching situation was cited where a picture gloss could be used to aid reading or listening comprehension. In later sections, mention was made of the use of picture glosses to aid vocabulary learning, and it was suggested that pictures might also help the learner to produce language, although, as with a verbal definition, a picture definition for productive use would require the addition of notes on grammar and usage.

The 1980's has been called "the decade of the dictionary", and as we have seen a significant number of learner's dictionaries produced in the eighties have been illustrated. Language teachers cannot afford to ignore such dictionaries, because the teacher who knows where to find the right illustration at the right moment is in possession of a powerful tool. Of course, dictionaries are always primarily for self-access, and it is up to the teacher to ensure that learners too are made aware of the uses of dictionary illustrations.

The full potential of the picture gloss in the classroom has not yet been fully explored, but the latest dictionaries have come up with some novel ways of representing meaning visually, and to some extent the ball now lies in the practising teacher's court. More picture glosses exist now than ever before - it is up to teachers and learners to start using them, and to spread the word about what can be done with them.

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UNCOMMONLY COMMON WORDS

J M Sinclair

INTRODUCTION

This paper considers what is involved in making a description of the very common words of a language, with learners very much in mind. There are two main sets of factors

(a) Those concerning how information about the word is gathered, evaluated and organised
(b) those concerning the presentation of the information in a reference work.

First of all, let us review common practice.

It is often said that very common words just waste space in a dictionary, that their proper place is in a grammar, and that no-one would ever look them up in a dictionary. (see Moon forthcoming and Hatherall for some discussion of these points).

The entries in most dictionaries are indeed not very helpful about words like, in English, the, of, and, - the most common words in the language. Because dictionaries traditionally give priority to semantic meaning, they try to analyse the words by semantic criteria. This is a difficult task - indeed these very words are frequently said to lack semantic meaning altogether. One dictionary gathers the following examples of of in one category of meaning.

the city of York
the art of painting
the age of eight
the problem of unemployment
a price increase of 15 per cent
some fool of a boy

Using the hallowed criterion of substitutability (ie the definition can actually replace of in the text) it defines of in this sense as that is/are; being.

It is difficult to imagine in what circumstances a person will need this information.

Another dictionary collects examples like

cure sb. of a disease ...
rid a warehouse of rats
rob sb. of his money
relieve sb. of his anxiety.

These are dubbed as "indicating relief, deprivation, riddance". It seems more likely that such an indication is given in the verb (cure, rid, etc) rather than in the of.

It might then be thought that a more helpful account of a word like of would be found in grammar books. Since its main contribution to the language appears to be its participation in grammatical structure, there should be a tidy treatment of it in any reasonable grammar.

Sad to say, this is not the case. Of pops up all over the place, attracting dozens of special statements. It does not readily fit a conventional grammar any more than it fits a conventional dictionary. In one recent grammar there are over 50 references to of, spanning the entire book with substantial entries in more than half the chapters.

In this grammar there seems to be an implied distinction between an "of-phrase", as in partitives like "a gallon of water", and prepositional phrases, which are dealt with elsewhere in the book. (Quirk et al 1985 chaps 5 and 9).

In a well-known pedagogical grammar there are fourteen references to of, fairly evenly spread over the first hundred pages. Twelve of these references concern the patterns in front of of, and only two ("possessives" and of all) concern what follows of.

(Thomson and Martinet, 1986)

Despite this scattered distribution, everyone seems unanimous that it is a preposition. However it does not seem to be at all a typical preposition. In one of our grammars, for instance it appears at the beginning of the chapter on prepositions and then drops out until some fairly minor uses are swept up towards the end (Quirk et al, 1985, chapter 9).

Prepositions are principally involved in combining with following nouns to produce prepositional phrases which function as adjuncts in clauses. This is not anything like the main role of of, which combines with preceding nouns to produce elaborations of the nominal group. So whereas typical instances of the preposition in and behind are

. in Ipswich
. in the same week
. behind the masks

typical instances of _of_ are

. the back of the van
. a small bottle of brandy

It is true that _of_ occasionally heads a prepositional phrase which functions as an adjunct, eg

I think of the chaps on my film course
.... convict these people of negligence

However, the selection of _of_ is governed by the choice of verb, and _of_ again is so sensitive to what precedes, more than to what follows. And these instances constitute only a small proportion of the occurrence.

The value of frequency information shows itself here, because without it a grammar could conveniently introduce _of_ as a plausible, ordinary preposition, and then add what in fact is its characteristic use as an extra. But with the overwhelming pattern of usage being in nominal groups, this fact must dominate any good description.

It may ultimately be considered distracting to regard _of_ as a preposition at all. I can think of no parallel classification in language or anywhere else. We are asked to believe that the word which is by far the commonest member of its class (more than double the next) is not normally used in the structure which is by far the commonest structure for the class. Doubts about whether _be_ should be considered a verb or not are not as serious as this.

It is not unreasonable to expect that quite a few of the very common words in a language are so unlike the others that they should be considered as unique, one-member word classes. If that status is granted to _of_, then there is no substantial difference between a dictionary entry for the word and a section of a grammar devoted to it. The one-member class is the place where grammar and lexis join.

The huge frequency of _of_ means that there is no lack of evidence; in fact in the present state of our ability to process language text, there is far too much evidence. Some kind of selection is necessary when _of_ is approximately every fiftieth word - over 2% of all the words - regardless of the kind of text involved.

The description offered below is the result of applying a simple procedure to deal with the embarrassment of examples. A selection of about thirty examples was retrieved arbitrarily from a large corpus, and on this evidence a tentative description was prepared. Then a second, similar set was retrieved and the description adjusted accordingly. After several such trawls, each new one added little to the picture, and it was felt that most of the major patterns had been exemplified, and quite a few minor ones as well.

To go beyond this requires either the application of a lot of labour or the creation of automatic routines. Before such investment, however, it is prudent to put the description forward for comment and criticism.

Frequency

This study is at a pilot stage and the actual frequency of instances of each category of use is not a reliable guide to the proportions in the language as a whole. The small samples showed hardly any consistency in the relative frequencies, and as usual most uses were exemplified in tiny percentages.

However, even when the study advances to consider much more evidence, there will always be problems about statements of proportion and frequency. This is because a large number of examples are in one way or another problematic. One of the inescapable conclusions of studying real text is that the categories of description are so intertwined in realisation that very few actual instances are straigthforward illustrations of just one of the factors that led to the particular choice.

This does not constitute an argument for making up examples - in fact if carefully examined it can be seen to contain the seeds of a total demolition of the view that people can replicate the real patterns of language outside their acts of communication. The selection of suitable examples for any particular explanation requires only a sufficiently large number of instances to choose from.

If many - sometimes most - of the actual instances show features that make them rather special, we are reminded of the fragility of any description, and the ever-present possibility that another way of organising the evidence may lead to a superior description.

Of outside the Nominal Group

Around 20% of the occurrence of of is not part of the regular structure of nominal groups. The main categories are:

(a) a constituent of various set phrases eg
of course; in spite of; out of; on top of; because of; consisting of; as a matter of fact; regardless of; in need of

(b) following certain verbs eg
remind; constructed; sapped; made up; thought; smell; heard

(c) following certain adjectives, eg
short; capable; full;

Of in Nominal groups

The simple structure of nominal groups is based on a headword which is a noun. Determiners, numerals, adjectives etc come in front of the noun and modify its meaning in various ways. Prepositional phrases and relative clauses come after the noun and add further strands of meaning.

The function of of is to introduce a second noun as a potential headword.

this kind of problem
the axis of rotation
the bottle of port
the treadmill of housework
leaves of trees

Each of the two nouns can support premodifiers, and the structural effect of these will be dealt with later in this paper.

To begin with, we note that in most cases the second noun (N2) appears to be the most salient. This is not what would normally be expected in a conventional grammar; the general structure the N1 of N2 would be analysed as having N1 as headword, with of N2 as a postmodifying prepositional phrase.

Some grammars recognise that this kind of analysis is unhelpful when N1 is a number or a conventional measure.

both of them
a couple of weeks
one of my oldest friends
one of these occasions
millions of cats
threequarters of the world
another of these devices
a lot of the houses
some of those characteristics
a number of logistic support ships

perhaps any of 'em could be added to this set.

In all cases N2 is the obvious headword.

We shall also attach to this set some more lexically rich partitives and quantifiers, which do not require special justification but indicate that this category, like most, has uncertain boundaries.

a series of S-shaped curves
the bulk of their lives

a fraction of a second
an average of 12.9 trout
groups of five
1,300 grams of cholesterol
the amount of sulphur dioxide
the bottle of port

In the last example, the classification here depends on interpreting bottle as more a measure rather than a physical object.

The status of headword

Before proceeding to more controversial cases, let us consider the status of headword, since the identification of headword is the first step in describing a nominal group.

The headword is the only obligatory element in the group, so it should not be capable of ready omission. Here we are not concerned with the niceties of syntax, or even concord, but with whether or not a listener or reader would be likely to follow the sense with one of the nouns missed out.

Consider some examples

a. Once I escaped the grasp of the undertow and had reached a rock ...
b. Once I escaped the grasp and had reached a rock ...
c. Once I escaped the undertow and had reached a rock ...

a. There are many examples of local authorities who've taken ...
b. There are many examples who've taken ...
c. There are many local authorities who've taken ...

a. By the evening of 5th August further enemy attacks had ...
b. By the evening further enemy attacks had ...
c. By the 5th August further enemy attacks had ...

In each of these cases it is the omission of N2 that does the greatest damage to coherence, and (c) is preferable to (b).

A similar result is given by another criterion. It is reasonable to expect the headword of a nominal group to be the principal reference point to the physical word. In a large number of cases, N2 is the closer to a concrete physical object than N1

the shapes of simple organisms
a glimpse of the old couple
the position of France

Focus Nouns

Using these criteria, and expecting that it is normal for N2 to be the head-word, the notion of quantifier or partitive can be extended into a general area of "focus". The first step is to include examples where N1 specifies some part of N2

the middle of a sheet
the end of the nipple
the edge of the teeth
the top of the pillar
the end of the day
a part of us
that part of its power
the undersides of plates

This category of "part" can be extended in various ways; for example by more specialised words still indicating essentially a part of N2.

the evening of 5th August
the first week of the war
some green ends of onion
a small dried drop of it
The interior of Asia
the depths of the oceans
the point of detonation
in the midst of the grey gloom
the beginning of the world where winter is real
the outskirts of Hannover
leaves of trees
the horns of the bull

We move from "part" to a more general notion of "focus". N1 specifies some component, aspect or attribute of N2 which is relevant to the meaning of N2 in the context. Quite often these are familiar idiomatic phrases.

The whole hull of your boat
the cream of the Cambridge theatre
an arrangement of familiar figures
the perils and labours of incubation
a uniform grouping of all arms
a little shrill gasp of shock
the recommendations of the Nunn-Bartlett Report
the text of two or three White House tapes
the disadvantages of wear and tear
generations of men
Five thousand years of superstition, humbug and mumbojumbo
a list of the items ...
a little glimmer of satisfaction
The net of amateur or "ham" radio stations
the sound of his feet
a new generation of cards
a fact of modern life
a sequence of zeroes and ones
a blistering heat of the prairie
their principles of operaton
the headquarters of Sinn Fein
argument of the "zero-growth" school
The study of geography

Some examples of this category have been reserved for special attention.

the portals of the Police Judiciary

This example shows N1 as almost redundant and present for stylistic reasons.

the forces of the Atlantic Alliance

In this example N1 also seems on the verge of redundant; a kind of explicitness that is likely to have a tactical motive.

the granite of the Colorado Rockies

Assuming that the Colorado Rockies are made of granite, and that this is not a "part" example, it is again virtually redundant and is motivated by stylistic considerations.

Support

The next major category is distinct from the "focus" meaning because N1 is seen as offering some kind of support to N2, rather than just specifying some relevant aspect of N2. There are several rather distinct mechanisms for this.

In some instances N1 is a noun which is typically used as a supporting or delexicalised noun in complex structures.

the notion of machine intelligence
the position of France
an object of embarrassment
various kinds of economic sanctions
many examples of local authorities
the context of a kitchen
the familiar type of the peppery conservative

One colloquial development of this structure is a cover for vagueness, as exemplified by

a sort of parody
the kind of thing that Balzac would have called ...
a sort of "A" like that
some sort of madness
this kind of problem

Marginal to this category and the preceding one is the type where the support noun has considerable lexical force, but is subordinated by the structure

the burden of partial occupation

In an interesting extension of this category, the support noun, N1, offers additional grammatical support.

an act of cheating (constructed example)

In such an example, the support noun act offers its countability and "nounness" to the participial cheating. The actual example on which this is based makes the point clear.

a single act of cheating

in another example

the power of speech

the support noun power is almost redundant, but offers a grammatical rather than a semantic focus.

By the device of metaphor, another kind of support is offered to N2.

the juices of their imagination
the grasp of the undertow
a twilight of reason and language
the treadmill of housework

Double-headed nominal groups

In most of the above cases, N2 will be accepted as the headword (though see the discussion below, on modifiers of N1). But there remain many cases where neither noun seems to be pivotal or dominant, and where the structure simply requires both of them.

One minor type is, roughly speaking, the title. The first noun names someone or something that is affiliated to the institution named in N2.

The Garden of Allah
the Duchess of Bedford
the United States of Europe
the new President of Zaire

Much more important, however, is the type where there is something approximating to a propositional relationship between the two nouns. The two nouns are understood as being in a "verb-subject" or "verb-object" kind of relationship.

The meaning of the structures can be brought out by composing clauses of equivalent meaning, for example

the payment of Social Security

This is similar to a clause such as "x pays Social Security" and N2 is in an "object" relationship to N1.

the enthusiastic collaboration of auctioneers

In this example, related to "Auctioneers collaborate enthusiastically", N2 is in a "subject" relationship to N1.

Many grammars would explain these structures as clauses which had been somehow transformed into nominal groups, and indeed in a large number of cases N1 is a noun derived from a verb (payment from pay; collaboration from collaborate). It is, however, unnecessary to describe one structure as derived from another, and it is a complication which tends to ignore the function of of.

In general, we can say the following: the nominal group allows for two nouns to be chosen, of equal status and connected by of. These are interpreted as propositional, and the listener or reader deduces the likeliest propositional relationship. One consequence of using this construction is that N1 can be modified as a noun, whereas in the equivalent clause it would be modified as a verb.

Here is a representative collection of examples, including some which may be regarded as marginal or overlapping with another category.

the British view of the late senator
widespread avoidance of call-up
a wonderful sketch of her
the aim of the lateral thinker
reflection of light
the owner of the Estancia
the description of the lady
the growth of a single-celled creature
sales of its magazine
advertising of infant formula
the killing of civilians
the spreading disillusion of Mrs Nixon's oldest supporters
an exhibition of his work
a superlative examiner of undergraduates
the expectation of a million dollars
the teaching of infants
control of the company
the design of nuclear weapons
a direct reflection of the openness ...
the large movements of currency
a clear reflection of the position

The main overlap is with the "focus" category for N1, and we can recall some of those examples which would not necessarily be out of place here

an arrangement of familiar figures
a uniform grouping of all arms
the recommendations of the Nunn-Bartlett Report
the sound of his feet

Certainly it is easy to find equivalent clauses for these examples ("X arranges familiar figures", etc). However such an operation seems to offer a misleading interpretation of the nominal group, as compared with the "focus" classification which relies on collocation (recommendaton - report and the conventional associations we make in the light of our experience of the world.)

Another "propositional" categroy arises when N1 is patently related to an adjective, and this is understood as being in a complement relation to N2 as quasi-subject.

the shrewdness of the inventor

This is clearly relatable to a proposition such as "the inventor was shrewd".

The final type of "double-headed" nominal group is the one that gives rise to statements in grammars that associate of with possession. Because of equivalences like

The cabinet of Dr Caligari

and "Dr Caligari's Cabinet", it is sometimes said that the N1 of N2 structure is an alternative way of stating that N2 "possesses" N1. In fact the of structure has little to do with ownership or possession, as can be seen when a personal pronoun in N2 position has to be expressed in the possessive form

a mate of mine

not *a mate of me. The structure has to do with a fairly loose kind of association, common location and the like

the tea shops of Japan
the Mission to the United Nations of the People's Republic of China
the closed fist salute of ZANU-PF

Modification of N1

The previous section covers instances of N1 of N2 which are double-headed regardless of the modification of either noun. However, an interesting process can be seen in the earlier "focus" category where N1 is modified by one or more adjectives.

(a) Japan's first taste of Western progress
(b) the familiar local life of Zermatt

(c) the governing mechanism of the new EEC
(d) the technical resources of reconnaissance
(e) a comprehensive selection of containers

Without the modifiers, we might classify (a) (b) (c) and (e) under "focus" genreally and (d) as a support noun. It is clear that the secondary role of N1 is much enhanced by modification, so that the examples above should be regarded as doubled-headed. Neither N1 nor N2 can easily be omitted.

In exemplifying earlier categories, quite a few examples of modified N_1 were included, and these are now retrieved below for consideration. Many would be best placed in this double-headed category (though the semantic relation between N1 and N2 is not affected).

this first week of the war
a uniform grouping of all arms
a little shrill gasp of shock
five thousand years of superstition ...
a little glimmer of satisfaction.
the new generation of cards
various kinds of economic sanctions
the familiar type of the peppery conservative
little hope of new ideas
some green ends of onions
a small dried drop of it

Mopping Up

It is an important feature of this method of investigation that no instances are overlooked in any sample, no matter how awkward or bizarre they might be. Those which do not readily fall into any of the preceding categories are:

Superlative adjectives

the most delectable of soups
the most perfect fossilising medium of all

This is clearly a regular syntactic pattern for which provision must be made in a grammar.

Birds of paradise
the axis of rotation

the patience of Job
a court of law
a lack of distinction

In their various ways these seem to be relatively fixed phrases, and thus of no structural interest.

fantasies of the ship's sinking

This is an unusual example, probably closest to the double-headed associative relationship as in

the Cabinet of Dr Caligari

Evaluation

To test the comprehensiveness and accuracy of the description, we take a fresh sample and see how well it accounts for the cases. See Fig 1. (a few of these examples are used in the introduction.)

Figure 1 A Set of instances of of

1. off the end of Long Island
2. and you hadn't heard of either
3. his own degree of guilt
4. a small bottle of brandy
5. None of the final few clippings
6. overhung the slope of the Third Ice Field!
7. and would bring her some sense of what she was
8. the easing of, shall we say, the rules of
9. with a touch of indefinable pathos in his make-up
10. with Conrad asleep in the back of the van,
11. a tiny little bit like the shock of rape
12. I think of the chaps on my film course
13. one has days when one isn't certain of anything
14. A group of unstable left-wing countries
15. to people who knew neither of them well
16. the lives of one quarter of the human race
17. convict these people of negligence, or of criminal irresponsibility
18. in the early stages of a conflict
19. in the midwestern states of North America

20. rundown buildings, modest blocks of flats
21. Succeeding generations of youthful American males
22. Operations of this sort
23. a series of most able incumbents of the post
26. it tears it open with the claws of its front legs
27. Dan had completed the first draft of his next play
28. Three hundred pounds is a lot of money
29. Once this sort of start had been made
30. has not the least of the sensual joys of the evening
31. spotted with the loveliest of colours,
32. A parson's just as cunning as the rest of 'em when it comes to money,
33. The patch may look newer than the rest of the carpet,
34. no money when you of all people could have had it
35. Prepare ye the way of the Lord
36. I found a prodigality of pattern and colour

Non-nominal instances of of

(a) phrases - none
(b) verbs 2 heard of
 12 think of
 17 convict of
(c) adjectives 13 certain of

Nominal Group

I (a) (i) conventional measure
 5 none of the final few ...
 15 neither of them
 16 one quarter of the human race
 26 a lot of money
 30 the rest of 'em
 31 the rest of the carpet

(ii) less conventional measures
 3 degree of guilt
 9 a touch of indefinable pathos
 14 a group of unstable left-wing countries
 4 a small bottle of brandy
 34 a prodigality of pattern and colour

(b) (i) focus on a part
1 the end of Long Island

(ii) focus on a more specialised part
6 the slope of the Third Ice Field
10 the back of the van
18 the early stages of a conflict
19 states of North America

(iii) focus on a component, aspect or attribute

11 the shock of rape
20 blocks of flats
21 generations of youthful American males
24 the claws of its front legs
25 the first draft of his next play

I (c) (i) support N1

27 this sort of start

Example 7 - some sense of what she was - is close enough to this category, but N2 is in this instance replaced by a clause.

(ii) metaphor - no examples

II (a) titles - no examples

(b) prepositional relationships
8 the easing of, shall we say, the rules of

III modification of N1

the following examples are double-headed:

4, 7, 18, 19, 20, 21, 28

IV (a) superlative adjectives
28 not the least of the sensual joys
29 the loveliest of colours

(b) set phrases

32 you of all people
33 Prepare ye the Way of the Lord

There are two examples which do not readily fit the descriptive framework.

22 operations of this sort

This example suggests a re-ordering of type I(c)(i), the support noun, though in this case the support noun is at N2. Such variation looks to be quite acceptable, so this category should be redefined.

23 incumbents of the post

This example looks like a propositional relationship but no obvious equivalent sentence is possible. Since it was stressed earlier that the relationship to a clause is purely made to illustrate meaning, there is no barrier to a word like incumbent at N1 even though there is, by chance, no related verb.

CONCLUSION

The previous section demonstrates that this account of of is reasonably robust, and that future trawls for examples will fill out categories but are not likely to uncover fundamentally disturbing evidence. The account given of of is basically simple and consistent, and the classification offered above forms a good basis for both a dictionary entry and a section in a grammar of English.

The ordering will probably vary - for example it is useful in analysis to filter out uncharacteristic instances, like the non-nominal uses of of, but often preferable to leave them to the end in presentation.

A grammatical account will concentrate on the status of the headword, and the distinction between single and double heads, and the indeterminate cases. A dictionary might prefer to say little about this and concentrate on the classification of use.

Within the nominal group structures each version of the information will choose a level of detail depending on the space available and the intended purpose of the book. In digest form the whole of category I could be summarised with two or three examples; with more space the distinctions into I(a), I(b), and I(c) are valuable. Whether or not I(c)(ii) - metaphor - is separately instanced might well be a later decision depending on the balance of the entry.

Whatever the purpose, this study shows that a firm classification of uses and meanings can be made, despite the fact that there are some problem cases and some overlaps. For the lexicographer there are very few usable examples in such a small selection, because each instance carries its own particularity. But a full scale study will provide ample evidence, and among the many examples there will be some that can be cited out of context without preplexing the user.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

All the examples quoted are taken from the Birmingham Collection of English Texts, which is the textual basis of the Cobuild Dictionaries and course materials. The description of *of* was built up over a number of presentations in the second half of 1988; at the TESOL Summer Institute in Flagstaff, Arizona, and at the BAAL Autumn meeting in Exeter, and with colleagues and students in Birmingham. I am grateful for the contributions of many generous people to this study.

A VOCABULARY FOR WRITING DICTIONARIES

Gwyneth Fox

In recent years the ELT world has been offered an increasingly specialized and sophisticated array of materials. This is particularly evident in the reference area. Before, learners struggled with materials that had not been prepared specifically with the foreign learner in mind. So the dictionaries that were used were ones that offered little help with the modern language, the thesauruses gave no clues to the relative frequency of the words given, and even the grammars, except those incorporated within textbooks, exemplified patterns some of which were of only limited use to learners. Nowadays, much, though not all, of this has changed. New grammars have been produced which claim to explain those parts of the English grammatical system that are of direct relevance to learners. A thesaurus, the Longman Lexicon of Contemporary English, has been published, with 10,000 words arranged in themes and grouped into semantic sets, so that students can see how they fit into a particular area of interest.

And, of course, dictionaries have been published which claim to help learners use the vocabulary of English in ways that are as close as possible to those used by native speakers. They do this in many ways. Obviously, they try to define words so that their meanings can be understood by people using the dictionary. They give the forms of the words, in some cases all possible forms, in order to help users with spelling. They have a complicated pronunciation system, usually based on IPA, which they hope learners will use to improve their pronunciation of English. All the dictionaries give a great deal of grammatical information, both implicit in the ways the words are defined, and explicit in the series of grammatical codes used to differentiate between, for example, different types of verbs, not only at the transitive - intransitive level but at a much more detailed level of complementation patterning.

There are often sections giving additional information, both about the language and about the culture. For example, Chambers Universal Learners Dictionary (CULD, 1980) has nine appendices, dealing with such topics as 'Numbers, Fractions and Numerical Expressions', 'Geographical Names, Nationalities and Languages' 'Ranks in the British Armed Forces', and 'The Solar System'. The Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English (LDOCE, 1987) includes appendices on 'Irregular Verbs', 'The Verb 'be'', and a long section on 'Word Formation', which incorporates the major prefixes and suffixes of English, as well as having appendices similar to CULD on 'Number', 'Weights and Measures', and 'Geographical Names'. The previous edition of LDOCE (1978) included a 'Spelling Table' and a 'Table of Family Relationships', but these are no longer to be found in the dictionary. The Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English (OALD, 1974) has most of the appendices found in the other dictionaries, plus 'Common Forenames', 'Punctuation', 'The Works of William Shakespeare', and 'The Books of the Bible'. In addition to these verbal extras both LDOCE and OALD have a number of illustrations, which have been added in order to help explain words and meanings of words which are hard to define. The illustrations are therefore there as aids to understanding of words. How well they do this job is open to question; but the principle of using illustrations in this way is a valid one. The Collins Cobuild English Language Dictionary (CCELD, 1987) is the only one of the dictionaries aimed specifically at foreign learners that does not give extra cultural or language information of the kinds described here; it has no illustrations; it includes no material in appendices; it aims at giving learners all they need to know about the vocabulary of the language within the main body of the text.

One extra to the dictionary text that all the learners dictionaries, including CCELD, have is material at the front of the dictionary setting out the philosophy behind each book, and also instructing users how to get the best out of the dictionary by explanations of the conventions used - the grammatical codes, the style labels, the pronunciation system, the way to find phrases and phrasal verbs, and so on. The amount of explanation differs from dictionary to dictionary, ranging from fifty three pages in LDOCE to 19 pages in CULD, but the type of explanation given is similar.

Apart from the illustrations, the one thing that all these extras to the text have in common is that they are all verbal; words are being used to explain to learners how to use the dictionary, to give learners additional information about areas of the language or the culture that the dictionary compilers feel are relevant to them, and of course to define the words that are entered in the main body of the text. It is this property that makes language unique; apart from the use of illustration, we have to use words to talk about words. This is the quality of reflexivity (Lyons 1977). The fact that we must use language in order to talk about language has for long caused problems for linguists, who have to ensure that they have available to them the vocabulary and conventions required to distinguish between the reflexive and the normal use of language. Dictionary compilers too should be aware of the problems.

This means that it is of vital importance in a dictionary to choose very carefully the words that are used to explain other words. This issue is very much alive among dictionary compilers and users, and there is much discussion on how these words should be chosen. How can we characterize and control the language of a dictionary? Should we indeed make any attempt to do so?

There is one school of thought, exemplified by the work of Carter (1987, 1988), which believes that any kind of vocabulary control is artificial. Carter points out that language users do exert control of their language, in the sense that they use different registers on different occasions, choosing those that are most appropriate to the situation they are in. This control is natural and automatic, not something imposed on them from without. One problem with defining vocabularies is that they sometimes achieve simplicity of definition by foregoing a certain amount of accuracy. By having to define words using a prescribed number of other words compilers are forced to simplify and in some cases slightly distort meaning. Another problem is that abstract thoughts and ideas are less well catered for than concrete terms as far as their explanations are concerned. Yet another disadvantage to the control of vocabulary in this way is that it is artificial, with externally imposed restrictions that can lead to communication that is non-natural, causing a piece of language - in this case a definition - to be an act of communication that could never occur in natural language (see Sinclair 1984).

There is an opposing school of thought, explained by Della Summers in a recent article in English Today (1988), which asserts that a suitable vocabulary should be thought out in advance and then imposed on the compilers in order to exert control over the process. If new words are explained in terms of words that learners already know, it is argued, they then have more chance of understanding these new words and of internalizing the meanings of the new vocabulary items that they meet. And certainly learners do seem to feel that this is true. They like to know that vocabulary in definitions has been carefully controlled, feeling that this leads to ease of understanding (see McFarquhar and Richards, 1983). How true this actually is is difficult to assess.

There was much discussion on this issue of controlled versus non-controlled vocabulary at the beginning of the Cobuild project. It was recognized as vital that the people working on the project were alerted to it from a very early stage so that they would have some knowledge of how words should be explained, and of why that way had been decided upon. Our initial feeling very much leaned towards the belief that any kind of vocabulary control is artificial, that words should always be explained in whatever other words are needed. We still believe that this is the correct way to proceed.

The Cobuild project was set up in 1980 to look at how English is used at the present time. It was envisaged as a three-stage project: the creation of a corpus of modern English, the creation of a database holding the observations made by lexicographers about the words found in the corpus, and the publication of materials based on these findings. That means that some of our work is very explicitly intended for publication, and other of our work is aimed at internal and research workers only. In our work that is not intended for publication, for example in our various databases, we explain words in whatever other words we feel most accurately capture the meanings. That means that the original explanations of words in the lexical database will often have a number of variant phrases, which are attempting to get ever closer to the nub of the meaning. This was very important to us, since we analysed words in semantic groups, one lexicographer for example dealing with all colour words, another with household equipment, another with verbs of movement, another verbs of speech. This meant that we could look very closely at similar words and see how their meanings differed, often picking up fairly subtle distinctions and nuances. All of these could be held in the database, expressed in any way that seemed appropriate.

However, most of our present publications that are taken from our databases are aimed at learners of English as a foreign language. We must use in them language that learners will understand. We therefore ask our editors to monitor carefully the language they choose to use. We ask them, wherever possible, to explain words in other words that are more frequent than the ones they are defining. This they can usually do, because we have computer statistics that tell us the relative frequency of words. It is possible to group them, and so to define one word in terms of a group of words more frequent than it is. That means that a word such as 'egalitarian', which is one of our least frequent words, can be defined: 'An egalitarian idea, system, person, or society is one that expresses or supports the belief that all people are equal and should have the same rights and opportunities; a formal word'. All the words used in the definition are more frequent than the word that is being defined.

Problems come, of course, when explaining words in the most frequent band. In these cases editors are asked to explain words as simply but as accurately as possible. This does occasionally mean that the very frequent words are explained in slightly less frequent words, although hopefully self-evident ones. Take 'give', for example: 'If you give something to someone, you offer it to them as a present'. The words 'offer' and 'present' are less frequent than 'give', but the use of them together should convey the meaning of 'give' to all but the most beginning learner.

Wherever possible, editors are asked to avoid the use of phrasal verbs, the meaning of which might seem obvious to native English speakers, because it is well-known that even fluent foreigners have difficulty in decoding them. One obvious way of defining 'care for' is 'look after', a more frequently used phrasal verb. It was felt that this could be misleading. So a much longer definition was written: 'If you care for someone, you provide them with all the things that they need to keep them well and make sure that they do not come to any harm'. There are, however, times when avoiding a phrasal verb would lead to a definition that is too complicated. In that case, we prefer to use a phrasal verb: 'If something juts out. it sticks out above or beyond a surface or edge'.

At one stage we considered, for our published works though not for our databases, imposing greater control than this. We rejected the idea, preferring to rely on the role of precept rather than on imposition. We felt that it was worth waiting to see what happened, to make a final decision once we had done the job. Having seen how variegated the chosen language was, we could then decide whether or not it was necessary to restrict the range of vocabulary used, and whether by restricting vocabulary we would lose too many of the subtleties of meaning that we had noted.

In fact, when we examined the vocabulary used by our editors, we felt that it was not necessary to restrict it further. We also realised that it would not have been possible to infer the needs of the defining vocabulary from normal usage. We then felt justified in our policy of not imposing restrictions on the editors.

The reason is that once it is analysed, many of the words used are obvious; but to predict them in the first place would have been more problematic. The difficulty is that once you have seen the words, you cannot imagine not using them; but if you had tried to tell people beforehand what words to use, making the list either out of a vacuum or out of a general frequency list, there would have been some words on the list that were never needed, and much more importantly some words that were not on the list but that were very frequently needed. This can be seen if you look at the lists of vocabulary items used in the definitions in LDOCE and in the new Collins dictionary, the Collins Cobuild Essential English Dictionary (CCELD, 1988).

Both th[illegible]dictionaries include at the end a list of their defining vocabularies. The differences in some cases are surprising. In the letter 'E' the Essential dictionary made considerable use of, among others, the words 'efficient', 'elaborate', 'embarrassed', 'embarrassing', 'emotions', 'emotional', 'emphasize', 'energy', 'enthusiasm', 'equipment', and 'extent', none of which are in the LDOCE list. That, however, has 'ear', 'eastern', 'elastic', 'elbow', 'enclosure', 'equality', 'establishment' and 'eyelid', none of which are on the Essential list, and so were not often required in the compilation of the Essential Dictionary. Otherwise they would have been used. Yet words like 'emotion' and 'emphasize' were extensively used, and the editors would in many cases have found it hard to define a word if they had not been allowed to use them.

We found, looking at the list of words used in the dictionary definitions, that there was a strong tendency to use a certain word in the explanations of similar types of word. For example, the word 'characteristics' is used in the definitions of 'acquire', 'develop' 'mutate', 'evolution', and of 'quality', 'essence', 'archetype', 'nature', and 'inherent' - two very obvious semantic groupings.

A few words are used in the Essential Dictionary several times, but less than ten, to explain a small group of meanings. For example, the word 'saddle' was used seven times: in the definitions of saddle a horse, saddle up, saddlebag; and also bareback, crossbar, sidesaddle, and stirrup. The word 'pasta' was used four times: in 'spaghetti', 'macaroni', 'noodles', and 'pasta' itself.

These specialized uses are worthy of careful study in due course, to investigate ideas like Carter's of a 'core' vocabulary. But with a broader perspective we felt we should first consider the words that were of general utility, and we expressed that by selecting all the words that occurred ten times or more in the text of the Essential Dictionary.

Taking the individual forms of words which were used 10 times or more, we collected approximately 3000 forms. Putting together the various lemma forms - ie 'take', 'takes', 'taking', 'took', 'taken' - we have about 2000 headwords. Interestingly, this is the same headword size as the controlled vocabulary found in the Longmans learners' dictionaries.

The vocabulary is easier to describe as 3000 forms rather than conflated into the 2000 headwords, and so it is on the 3000 forms rather than the 2000 headwords that I shall concentrate in the rest of this paper.

These forms range from the most common word 'a', used 35056 times, through 'that', 14687, 'something', 12408, 'them', 3566, 'say' 2404, 'because', 1197, 'describe', 834, 'action', 408, 'machine', 218, 'worried', 94, 'untidy', 49, 'video', 14, and 'administrative', 'artistic', 'balance', 'bite', 'breakfast', 'disappointment', 'doubts', 'flexible' and 'wicked', all used 10 times.

In itself this does not tell us a great deal. The real interest comes when this list is compared with other lists, either ones taken from ordinary language or ones which have been deliberately built up, such as the restricted vocabulary used in some learners' dictionaries.

A comparison of the Essential list and one taken from general English

I therefore first of all compared the wordlist from the Cobuild Essential Dictionary with the top 2998 lemma forms of the 20 million word corpus of the Birmingham Collection of English Text, a corpus of general English of the 1970s and 1980s. For ease of reference I shall refer to these lists as the Essential list and the general list. Since the texts are so different in size (the dictionary is under 600,000 words), the comparison has to be tentative.

There are, however, some interesting results.

Basically the wordlists (indeed, all wordlists) differ in two ways: either words appear in both lists, but in different rank order; or words appear in one list only.

We then have to ask why this is so. How do we interpret any differences that we find?

When we look at the words that appear in both lists, just over 2000 are common to both. This is hardly surprising, as we did consciously try to define in simple words whenever possible. There are, though, some interesting frequency order differences.

Essential list rank		general corpus rank
1	a	5
2	you	14
3	is	11
4	or	29
5	to	4
6	it	8
7	the	1
8	of	2
9	that	7
10	if	41
11	something	145
12	in	6
13	and	3
14	are	27
15	someone	473
16	an	39
17	they	24
18	as	16
19	when	48
20	for	13
21	which	37
22	people	75
23	them	56
24	your	73
25	do	58
26	with	15
27	who	57
28	not	23
29	have	25
30	used	182

Table 1. A comparison of the top 30 forms in the Essential defining vocabulary and their rank in the general corpus.

At first sight, the most startling difference is that in the Essential wordlist the most frequent word is 'a', whereas in the 20 million general list the most frequent word, as all linguists would expect, is 'the'.

This discrepancy is, of course, partly the result of a policy decision for the dictionary. The dictionary is written in full sentences, in as user-friendly a style as possible. This means that all count nouns are defined in terms of 'a' - 'A gardener is a person who is paid to work in someone else's garden', 'A puncture is a small hole in a car tyre or bicycle tyre that has been made by a sharp object', 'a pseudonym is a name which a writer uses instead of his or her own name'. As can easily be seen, we are here talking about generalities not specifics - 'a small hole' not 'the small hole' - which again means that 'a' is used more than 'the'. That quality of generality makes this type of language very different from the language used by all of us most of the time in our day-to-day communication. A dictionary is not like an ordinary text because each new entry is in fact a little text in itself, with no links from one to the next. The object of the explanation is to introduce a word to the readers as if it were new to them, hence the use of 'a'. In continuous texts the use of 'the' is more common, because there you talk about the same things, things that have already been mentioned, and do not continually in every sentence bring in new things and new topics.

Most explanations of verbs in the dictionary start with the words: 'If you ...', 'When you ...' 'If someone ...' or 'If something ...'. That explains why 'you' is the second most frequent word in the Essential wordlist, moving up from fourteenth place in the general list; why 'if' is tenth rather than 41st; why 'when' is 19th rather than 48th; and, much more dramatically, why 'something' has leapt 458 places, from 473 to 14!

general corpus rank		Essential list rank
1	the	7
2	of	8
3	and	13
4	to	5
5	a	1
6	in	12
7	that	9
8	it	6
9	I	1520
10	was	242
11	is	3
12	he	297
13	for	20
14	you	2
15	with	26
16	as	18
17	on	35
18	had	374

general corpus rank		Essential list rank
19	be	43
20	his	628
21	at	49
22	but	154
23	not	28
24	they	17
25	have	29
26	this	188
27	are	14
28	by	34
29	or	4
30	she	301

Table 2. A comparison of the top thirty forms in the general corpus and their rank in the Essential list.

The words in the top thirty of the general list that do not appear on the Essential top thirty list are the pronoun 'I', 'he', 'she', 'his'; the verbs 'was', 'had', 'be'; the prepositions 'on', 'by'; the conjunction 'but'; and the determiner 'this'. Notice the position of 'I': 9th in the general list, 1520th in the Essential list.

There are about 800 words which are in the top 2998 words in the general list that are not in the Essential wordlist at all. These fall very neatly into a number of easily definable groups.

The most obvious, and certainly by far the largest, group is made up of the past tense or past participle of verbs, most of which occur in the present tense in the Essential list. Words like 'wished', 'watched', 'wondered', 'wrote', 'walked', 'visited', 'seemed', 'occurred', and more than one hundred others. This is explicable when you realize that dictionaries do not on the whole talk about things that have happened in the past. They describe what words mean, not what they meant - except in a few cases: 'Chariots were fast-moving vehicles with two wheels that were pulled by horses'. But this is unusual. The vast majority of words are explained rather as the word 'limbo' is explained in the Essential Dictionary: 'If you are in limbo, you are in a situation where you do not know what will happen next ...'. This tendency of dictionaries to use the present tense is accentuated in the Cobuild dictionaries, because they are attempting to describe only the English of the present day.

There is then in the general list this enormous group of past tense and past participle words, showing that in everyday life we talk a lot about things that have already happened. Narrative is thus usually in the past tense. When we are explaining how things work, we tend to use the present tense, to indicate that the statements hold in general and are not sensitive to the passing of time. Statements about language are of this latter kind, so it is reasonable to expect a preference for present tense verbs in dictionaries and grammar books. Even dictionaries that do not use full sentences have large numbers of present form verbs in them.

For example, the definitions for the word ’gasp’ in OALD read: ’struggle for breath; take short, quick breaths as a fish does out of water’.

There is another smaller, but still interesting group, made up of a pronoun and a contracted form of the verb ’be’ or ’have’: ’we’d’, ’we’re’, ’we’ve’, ’you’ll’, ’he’s’, and so on. And another group of auxiliaries and modals plus ’not’ - ’wasn’t’, ’weren’t’, ’wouldn’t’, ’won’t’. Both of these consist of contracted forms that are not used in the dictionary - and so however frequent they are in everyday language they will not occur in the Essential list.

There are a lot of numbers in the general list - ’eleven’, ’fifty’, ’fifteen’, ’dozen’: there is not much need for these more than once or twice in a dictionary.

And then there are words that refer to the here and now, words like ’here’, ’yesterday’, ’today’, and ’tomorrow’, words of great importance for the way in which we run and organise our lives; but too immediate for the needs of a dictionary. A dictionary expresses general facts which are likely to hold true for a long time and are not sensitive to the immediate present. Also the Cobuild Essential Dictionary is not a historical dictionary, and does not contrast current use with earlier use, so has no need for words like ’now’ and ’then’.

Turning to the words that are in the Essential Dictionary’s defining vocabulary list but not in the full 20 million list. Again, there are about 800 of them, again falling into some very obvious groups.

There is a group, not very big but quite important, of obvious grammatical words - ’grammar’, ’paragraph’, ’noun’, ’phrase’, ’adjective’, ’superlative’, ’clause’; all of them words which are needed to explain what is happening in language when we choose to use certain words. These are not words that people use very often in their normal everyday conversation. But they are of course necessary when talking about language. That is why they are on the Essential list but are not in the top 2998 words taken from the twenty million word corpus.

Still talking about the metalanguage of the dictionary, there is another group of words which explain the function or register of particular words. These are words such as ’rude’, ’polite’, ’disapproval’, ’refer’, ’indicate’, and so on, all words which do not explain the meaning of other words but which rather show when you use them and how you use them. Again, these are words which we certainly use in everyday language, but use much less frequently than they are used in the dictionary.

Verbs feature prominently, as one would expect, in both lists. But whereas they are typically in the past form in the general list they are typically in the present form in the Essential list. Some of the reasons for this were discussed above. Interestingly, it is almost always the same verbs which feature, with the form varying between the two lists.

There are what might at first sight seem to be a surprising number of adverbs in the Essential list, far more than there are in the general list. They are needed, however, for differentiating between words, for teasing out the subtle meanings of words. Therefore, 'calmly', 'loudly', 'quietly', 'angrily', 'completely', 'thoroughly', and so on are used in explanations such as: 'If you shout, you say words as loudly as you can ....', 'Food that is piquant is pleasantly spicy', 'If a place is pitch-black, it is completely dark'. These words are important in the language of the dictionary, less so in the language of everyday.

There is one more very important group indeed which features in the Essential list but not in the general list. This is a group of superordinate nouns, many of them subtechnical, which are used frequently in the dictionary to explain other nouns. These are obvious words such as 'tool', 'vegetable', and 'vehicle', which are self-evidently superordinates of numbers of words. Perhaps less obvious, but even more important, are words such as 'device', 'diagram', 'item', 'substance', and 'symbol'. These are words which may not be among the first words that most teachers would think of teaching to learners of English; but they are all words that learners need to know if they are to learn to put words into meaningful sets and to structure their knowledge of the language they are learning. It is worth considering whether words of this type should be taught much earlier in language courses than they are at present - if indeed they are ever actively taught. There is still a feeling among many teachers that vocabulary is acquired rather than learned. In some cases this might be true. But where words are so obviously valuable as words of this type perhaps more positive teaching of them should be done.

A comparison of two dictionary defining vocabularies

Having looked in this way at the differences between the Cobuild defining vocabulary and the language of everyday life, it then seemed interesting to compare the Cobuild vocabulary, which is a record of usage, with the Longman Defining Vocabulary, which was produced in advance of the writing of LDOCE. It is also used for the definitions in the Longman Active Study Dictionary of English, although it does not appear there. The Longman Defining Vocabulary is a list of 2000 common words with which definitions are written.

The impression that users get is that all definitions are written entirely in these words. This is actually not the case, as the editors make clear in the introductory material for LDOCE.

There are a number of prefixes and suffixes that can be added to the words given in the list. To take an example. The word 'force' appears in the list. It is then used in the dictionary definitions with various meanings. At 'gravity' there is the definition 'the natural force by which objects are attracted to one another'; at 'strongarm' there is 'using unnecessary force'; at 'push' there is 'to try to force (someone) to do something'; at 'army' there is 'the branch of a country's military forces that is concerned with attack and defence on land'. In the definitions of these four words 'force' is used with four separate meanings, spanning both nouns and verbs; and in one of them the noun is used in the plural. None of this appears in the list, perhaps justifiably. Less justifiable, however, is that at 'smash' the definition reads 'to go, drive, throw, or hit forcefully, as against something solid'. There is no mention of the word 'forcefully' in the defining vocabulary. There is 'force', there is 'full', there is 'ly'. That means that 'forcefully' is permissible. But it is not easy for the learner to grasp. Sometimes words from the list are combined: 'girl' is there, 'friend' is there. And at 'moll' the definition reads 'a criminal's girlfriend' - the meaning of which is not necessarily apparent from the sum of its parts.

Words that are not in the Longman word list but that are defined within three entries can also be used. Hardly surprisingly, the word 'phosphoric' is not in the list. It is though used in the definition of 'phosphate', which is separated from the 'phosphoric' entry by 'phospherescence' and 'phospherescent'. A student who has carefully read the front matter would know why 'phosphoric' was used in a definition; one who has not might be puzzled.

In addition, any word at all can be used in a definition provided that it is printed in small capitals if it is not in the Longman list, thus alerting users to the fact that these are less common words. This happens several times a page. To take the definition of 'superannuation; as one example: 'money paid as a PENSION, especially from one's former place of work'; and 'sunshade' as another: 'a light folding circular frame, similar to an UMBRELLA but usu. covered with colourful material ...'.

It can easily be seen from the examples given that the 2000 headwords of the Longman list are but a small part of the actual vocabulary used.

It is actually quite difficult to compare the Cobuild Essential wordlist and the Longman Defining Vocabulary. The Essential list shows all the forms that are used ten times or more, and how often they have been used. For example:

ability	139
abilities	30
actual	11
actually	53

do	3273
doing	676
done	625
does	495
did	91

All we know for LDOCE is that 'ability', 'actual', and 'do' are on the list; we do not know how often they have been used, or in which lemma forms, or even whether they have been used at all. In the Essential list we see that 'actually' is more important in the defining vocabulary than 'actual'. There is no way of telling whether this is so in LDOCE. Indeed, we do not know whether 'actually' is used; it could be - 'actual' + 'ly'; but we cannot know until we find it in an entry.

Indeed the list in the 1987 edition of LDOCE is confusing. Sometimes derived forms are shown; for example, 'agree' and 'agreement'. Other times they are not shown - 'measure' but not 'measurement', 'move' but not 'movement'. This latter example is striking. For Cobuild 'movement' is an important defining word; it is used 104 times in the singular and 66 times in the plural. It is certainly used in LDOCE; 'struggle' for example is defined as 'to make violent movements, esp. when fighting against a stronger person or thing'. Why then is it not acknowledged explicitly in the list, rather than implicitly through the permitted suffix - 'ment'?

It seemed worthwhile to take a letter from both lists, to show how they vary. The letter 'U' is the most dramatically different, because of the prefix 'un-' which LDOCE can use but need not acknowledge.

Essential list		Longman defining vocabulary
U		U
ugly	14	ugly
unable	98	uncle
unacceptable	34	under (prep)
unattractive	13	understand
uncertain	15	undo
unclear	13	uniform (n)
uncomfortable	22	union
unconscious	20	unit
uncontrolled	35	unite
under	100	universal
underground	19	universe

Essential list

U

underneath	27
understand	224
understood	28
understanding	25
undesirable	28
unemployed	10
uneven	10
unexpected	35
unexpectedly	30
unfair	33
unfairly	23
unfavourable	12
unfortunate	16
unfriendly	30
unhappiness	21
unhappy	68
unhealthy	14
unimportant	52
uninteresting	17
union	16
unit	51
united	35
university	65
unjust	10
unkind	24
unlikely	43
unnatural	11
unnecessary	29
unpleasant	452
unpleasantly	22
unreasonable	25
unsatisfactory	23
unsteady	17
unsuccessful	28
untidy	49
until	116
untrue	30

Longman defining vocabulary

U

university
until
up (adj, adv, prep)
upper (adj)
upright
upset (v)
upside down
upstairs (adj, adv)
urge
urgent
us
use
useful
useless
usual

Essential list		Longman defining vocabulary
U		U
unusual	88	
unwanted	13	
unwilling	31	
up	300	
upper	31	
upright	20	
upset	106	
upsetting	12	
upwards	39	
use / /	1742	
used	2754	
using	331	
uses	107	
use / /	92	
useful	97	
usual	149	
usually	613	

Table 3. Words beginning with 'U' in the Essential wordlist and the Longman Defining Vocabulary

The list of 'U' words in LDOCE looks much shorter than the list in the Essential Dictionary because there is no acknowledgemnet of words starting with the prefix 'un-'. And it is these which make up the vast majority of the Essential list. Of the 65 words on the Essential list 39 start with the prefix 'un-': 'unable', 'unfair', 'unpleasant', 'unlikely', 'unusual' being examples. There is no way of knowing whether these are used in LDOCE. Seeing how common some of them are in the Essential Dictionary it seems likely that a fairly large proportion of them are used. The important thing though is that the learner cannot know which are used and are therefore necessary for an understanding of the dictionary.

There are only two words not prefixed by 'un-' that are used in the Essential Dictionary and not in LDOCE. These are 'underground' and 'underneath', neither of which is a very significant word in the defining vocabulary. The

Longman list, short though it is (only 26 acknowledged items), contains ten words not on the Essential list: 'undo', 'uniform', 'universal', 'urge', 'us' and 'useless' being examples. There is also the item 'upside down', which is one of the two two-word items on the whole list, the other being 'owing to'. The compilers of the list presumably felt that the 'un-' of 'undo' was a less obvious prefix than the 'un-' of, say, 'untrue'. But it is an anomaly. It is difficult to imagine a definiton in a dictionary in which the word 'us' is used. It could be that this is a word which can potentially be used but which never actually is. Again, it would be interesting to know how many of these there are on the list.

The letter 'D' is also interesting, though too long to reproduce here. It does, however, show some of the main differences between the two lists.

Cobuild uses a large number of superordinate nouns and subtechnical nouns which do not appear in LDOCE. In the letter 'D' there is 'design', used 55 times, 'diagram', used 11 times, and 'device' and 'devices', used 148 times in the singular and 12 times in the plural. None of these are in the LDOCE list. Other such words from other letters of the alphabet are 'characteristic' and 'characteristics', used 43 and 39 times respectively, 'circumstances', used 44 times, 'extent', 98 times, 'feature' and 'features', 52 and 65 times, 'item' and 'items', 49 and 21 times, 'task' and 'tasks', 92 and 15 times, 'symbol' and 'symbols', 33 and 20 times. For Cobuild these, and many others, are important items of their defining vocabulary. LDOCE does not appear to need them.

It is worth investigating why Cobuild needs these words and yet LDOCE manages without them. As mentioned above, I had looked at all the words in the Essential Dictionary which included 'characteristic' and 'characteristics' in their explanation. I then looked up these same words in LDOCE. It is worth comparing the definitions for 'trait' and 'quality' in both dictionaries. The Essential definition is given first, followed by the LDOCE definition.

trait	A trait is a characteristic or tendency that someone has.
	a particular quality, especially of a person; CHARACTERISTIC
quality	A person's qualitities are their good characteristics, such as kindness or honesty.
	The qualities of a substance or object are its physical characteristics.
	something typical of a person or thing; CHARACTERISTIC

This shows that the word 'characteristic' is needed by the Longman definers, and might have been included in the list.

In its explanations the Essential Dictionary gives as much prgamatic information as possible, which explains why it needs another group of words that do not appear in LDOCE. In the letter 'D' these are words like 'definitely', used 40 times, 'deliberately', 109 times, 'disapproval', 196 times, 'discuss' and its lemma forms and 'discussion' and 'discussions', used 128 times in all their forms. In other letters of the alphabet there are words like 'completely', used 199 times, 'criticism' and 'criticize' and its lemmas, 93 times altogether, 'embarrass' and its various forms, 83 times, 'emotion', 'emotions' and 'emotional', 153 times, 'emphasis', 'emphasize', 'emphasizing' and 'emphatic', 344 times, 'indicate' and its lemma forms, 418 times, and 'refer', 'refers', 'referring;, 'referred' and 'reference', a startling 1061 times. Words of this type are used in explanations such as the following. 'You can refer to something that you think has no useful purpose as an irrelevancy'. 'You can describe the weather as miserable when it is raining or cold'. 'If something confirms what you believe, it shows that it is definitely true'. 'You can use 'dreadful' to emphasize the degree or extent of something bad'.

Cobuild is thus giving as much information as it can about how words are used and when they are used, as well as about their semantic meaning. This would seem to be handled differently in LDOCE, otherwise surely words of this type would be needed.

To see how LDOCE got round the problem of not using these words, I looked up some words where the Essential Dictionary used 'emphasize', and then checked on the same words in LDOCE. Again the Essential definition is given first, followed by the LDOCE one.

abject	You use abject to emphasize that a situation or quality is shameful or depressing.
	(of a condition) as low as possible; pitiful; WRETCHED
accentuate	To accentuate something means to emphasize it or make it more noticeable.
awful	You can use awful to emphasize how large an amount is.
	(used to add force) very great

In each case the compilers seem to need the word 'emphasize' to give a good definition. Indeed, for 'accentuate' they use it.

LDOCE gives usage notes from time to time which go some way to explaining pragmatic force, but these do not seem to be restricted to the defining vocabulary (so that, for example, on page 10 in a usage note about 'actually' the word 'sarcasm' is used. It is not in the defining vocabulary). This may help to explain the absence of words like 'emphasize' from the Longman defining vocabulary.

CONCLUSION

Words that are used in dictionaries aimed at the foreign learner of English to explain other words have been carefully chosen by the compilers, either from an already existing wordlist or simply because the compilers feel that those are the best words to use. These words are therefore important and well worth studying by linguists and teachers alike. Now that computers are so widely used in dictionary compilation, perhaps a convention could be established of reporting what words are used in the explanations and how often they are used. This has been started in the Cobuild Essential Dictionary, although even there a full list of every single word that is used has not been given. In the future perhaps the list will contain the whole vocabulary used for explanations. What the Essential list does is to give all the forms of a word that have been used ten or more times, and to say how many times they have been used. This is invaluable to the user, who thus knows what words are necessary for an understanding of the dictionary explanations. Open-ended lists like the one found in the Longman's Dictionary of Contemporary English are not nearly clear enough, as it is not possible for a user to know whether a word that is in the list is used frequently, infrequently, or even not at all; and, more importantly, the user does not know what forms of a word are used. Is it simply the base form as given in the list? Or are derived words also used?

It is essential to realise that the relative frequency of words used in dictionaries to talk about other words is not the same as the relative frequency of words in the language as a whole. This is because a dictionary is a very specialized text, consisting of many thousands of little texts, which thus have the characteristics typical of such texts. Even the Essential Dictionary, which was compiled using ordinary language techniques, shows substantial differences from the general wordlist which is based on running text of approximately twenty million words.

Language teachers should find these word lists illuminating and occasionally surprising. They constitute a vocabulary which the learner needs to command in order to profit from the reference books available, and they should pehaps have a priority over words which are less valuable in the learning process.

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VOCABULARY, CULTURE AND THE DICTIONARY

Hilary Bool and Ronald Carter

> 'The whole of language is a continuous process of metaphor, and the history of semantics is an aspect of the history of culture; language is at the same time a living thing and a museum of fossils of life and civilization.' (Antonio Gramsci)

INTRODUCTION: RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

The recent upsurge of interest in the study and teaching of vocabulary is long overdue. This renewal follows a period of relative neglect during the nineteen fifties and sixties where the main emphasis was on grammar and pronunciation but its roots lay in pioneering work in the 1930's and 40's by language teachers such as Michael West (see Tickoo, 1988) one of whose main interests was in developing more systematic approaches to vocabulary learning and teaching. There are three main strands to the growth of vocabulary studies in the 1980's (for a survey see, Carter, 1987): vocabulary learning and acquisition procedures often based on empirical data collected and tested within the broad parameters of work in second language acquisition; materials devoted to the theory and practice of vocabulary teaching with particular reference to EFL and ESL, see Carter and McCarthy, 1988; Wallace, 1982; Morgan and Rinvolucri 1986; descriptive studies of the lexical semantic structure of English and of the mental lexicon of English words (Cruse, 1986; Aitchison, 1987). To these trends should be added the rapid growth in sophistication in the description of lexis for purposes of pedagogical lexicography, see, for example, the new edition of LDOCE (Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English; Longman, 1987) and, in particular, the recently published Collins COBUILD English Language Dictionary (Collins, 1987) which is based on an eight year lexical research project with lexicographers having access to over twenty millions words (400 million words of running text) of data based on a computerised collection of naturally occurring English texts.

What we have termed an upsurge in vocabulary studies in language teaching can be interestingly compared with another domain in language teaching which has also recently undergone rapid new developments but which also has parallel roots in earlier pioneering work (see Lado, 1957). Two books published in 1987, one more theoretical, the other more practical and classroom-based, will accelerate this process: the first is an edited collection of papers (Smith, ed, 1987) entitled Discourse Across Cultures; the other a collection edited by Valdes with the intriguing title Culture Bound: Bridging the Cultural Gap in Language Teaching. (Valdes, ed, 1987)

CULTURAL MARKING IN LEXIS

Our starting point in this paper is the obvious one that vocabulary and culture are closely related at many levels within the lexicon and that the teaching of lexical knowledge is always in part at least a process of acculturation. Related to this is a further observation that the above cited advances in EFL lexicography are not always paralleled by equivalent sophistication in presenting the interrelations between lexical and cultural knowledge. In this connection, we have also observed in our own teaching that advanced students are not always well-served by vocabulary teaching and lexicographic materials and that it is often in everyday cultural activities such as reading newspapers, especially those of the 'target culture' that particular difficulties arise. We discuss the issues surrounding 'target culture' below but we begin by examining the treatment of selected culture-bound phrases in the applied linguistics literature before moving to evaluate their presentation in three widely used EFL learner dictionaries.

There has not been any really extensive description of culturally-marked lexis or any very detailed examination of its implications for language study and teaching. Seminal work has been produced by Lakoff and Johnson in their study of Metaphors We Live By (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980). Lakoff and Johnson demonstrate how the western cultural system is structured by metaphors to which are analogised key modes of behaviour. For example, time is regularly analogised with money (eg spend time; waste time; save time) or theories are analogised with the construction of buildings (eg construct a theory; build a theory; the theory has secure foundations; demolish a theory). Knowing these words is thus to some extent knowing the modes of perception and the conceptual structures within which they are embedded.

It is largely within the linguistic domains of idiomaticity and related structures such as metaphor that cultural patterning takes place and it is perhaps no exaggeration to say that most fixed expressions of this kind are always to a degree linguistic and cultural units. Broughton (1978) has shown in an interesting informant-based study how British native speakers map culturally and hence linguistically everyday features of their environment such as chair. Both the 39 items the informants came up with as hyponyms of the word seat and the associations elicited in a later study bring out how firmly the lexical structure is embedded in everyday British material and ideational culture.

Several writers on this subject (eg Alexander, 1978, 1983; Carter, 1987) point to the existence of clines of decodability in fixed expressions. Here it is argued that fixed expressions may be divided into three main groups according both to the nature of the morpho-syntactic irregularities and the semantic density of the expression. Thus, into the first group would come idioms in which the morpho-syntactic form is irregular but the meaning clear. eg to go one better, to hold true, to be good friends with smb; the second group would contain expressions with a more regular form but unclear meanings eg to be in the dog house; to burn the candle at both ends; the third group would be made up of irregular forms and semantically opaque terms eg to go it alone; to be at daggers drawn; to be at large. It will be recognised, of course, that these categories are not wholly discrete and that the notion of a cline (or clines) is a useful one in embodying the gradability of different expressions in a continuum from 'transparent' to 'opaque'. In fact, the notion is useful in a parallel way for representing a relative cultural decodability in those fixed expressions which are especially marked for cultural associations.

Thus, fixed expressions (especially those of a proverbial kind) can be culturally opaque or transparent depending on the degree of cultural knowledge a learner needs to draw upon for purposes of decoding the expression. For example, it can be reasonably hypothesised that because of their general universality, items of food and, in particular, processes of cooking might be more decodable than items which carry associations or allusions to culture-specific myths, and related modes of thinking about the universe. According to such a hypothesis a phrase such as Too many cooks spoil the broth would be relatively transparent whereas phrases containing references to sheep in a 'biblical' sense such as sort out the sheep from the goats or which refer to Christ the shepherd with a 'flock' of followers would be correspondingly more opaque. Similarly, the relative opaqueness of phrases (proverbial and catch phrases) such as cutting off one's nose to spite one's face; Catch-22; Big Brother is watching you or mad as a March hare is connected with their embedding in British social, literary and cultural history. It is in these particular kinds of linguistic context that learners not sharing certain cultural presuppositions are likely to encounter genuine difficulties of understanding, and especially so when it is remembered that in texts such phrases often generate networks of related items which in turn presume understanding of the relevant cultural environment.

Yet further inspection of this phenomenon reveals, however, that difficulties or 'opaqueness' are not automatically confined to cultural allusion or to the accessibility of certain cultural processes. Fixed expressions constructed in and around such 'universal' phenomena as sun, rain, clouds, wind will be interpreted differently according to one's cultural location. Thus, every cloud has a silver lining would be more difficult to understand if one is culturally positioned to interpret clouds as the source of happiness, relief and accompanying rain.

Alexander (1983:18) has also pointed to the ways in which commonly recognised animals are used in culturally loaded ways and even sometimes by equation with the human world which is not automatically a normal practice in all cultures. Examples given by Alexander include: stag party; loan shark; lame duck; monkey business. Even universal phenomena such as colours present difficulties in so far as colours both segment reality differently in different languages and in turn often carry distinct cultural associations. For example, green fingers; in the red/in the black; yellow (cowardly); green (innocent; inexperienced); a black mood; blue movies are known to translate into other languages by means of circumlocution or by means of another colour. Interestingly for our own range of examples here considerable semantic opaqueness occurs when colours and animals are equated. Some of the more impenetrable of fixed expressions such as red herring; white elephant result from such a conjuncture.

It will be seen from these examples that we conceive of 'culture' in its broadest sense from material facts of everyday life through to institutional patterning and to whole belief systems. (For an interesting discussion of the meanings of the word culture itself which is based on data collected from the corpus used for the COBUILD dictionary see Stock, 1984.) In the next section we undertake preliminary analysis of empirical data which we have collected in our teaching of advanced English to non-native speakers, which we have 'looked up' in three of the most widely used of learner dictionaries: LDOCE (Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English (ed. Della Summers) (1987); Collins COBUILD English Language Dictionary (ed. John Sinclair) (Collins, 1987); OALD (Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary (ed. Tony Cowie et al) (OUP, 1974). We shall refer to these dictionaries in abbreviated form as follows: LDOCE; COBUILD; OALD.

LOOKING UP WORDS: EXAMPLES AND CONTENTS

The following four examples are all drawn from texts used by us for purposes of teaching academic English to advanced non-native learners of English. The difficulties encountered with the highlighted words were in each case indicated to us by the students themselves either in the classroom contexts or directly to us after completion of a homework exercise.

The first example is from an article in The Guardian - a 'quality' British newspaper - published on December 13, 1988. (See Appendix for complete article). The highlighted item here is Velcro fastener. The first occurrence of the phrase is in the opening sentence:

> The AIDS virus uses a kind of Velcro fastener to bind to the cells it destroys . . .

Here an analogy is drawn between the Aids virus and an everyday material feature of a culture. The analogy is designed to clarify things for the layman reader who, in order to follow the analogy must be able to create an accurate mental picture of the phenomenon. Although there is a brief gloss in the third paragraph of the article, students will often want to resort to a dictionary for further explanation. LDOCE contains the following:

velcro n. [u] trademark (often capitalised); a material used for fastening things together, consisting of a surface covered with a large number of very small nylon points that can fasten tightly to another piece of velcro when the two pieces are pressed together.

In our opinion this somewhat tortuous definition is, in fact, less accurate than the gloss in the text but it does at least serve to identify the item as a culturally-specific product known by its British trade name. Interestingly, there are no entries for the item 'VELCRO' or 'VELCRO fastener' in either OALD or COBUILD.

The second example - a widely-occurring fixed expression - is a little less straightforward. The highlighted item is state of the art. The item occurs in contexts such as the title of lectures or academic reviews eg ESP: State of the Art: or, as recorded in a recent BBC1 newsbroadcast when the engines of a recently crashed airliner were described as 'state of the art'. Our text (see Appendix) is drawn from an engineering journal in which the following sentence occurs ('in this respect' refers anaphorically to cell technology and 'Invergordon' is an aluminium smelter in Scotland):

> Invergordon was considered 'state of the art' in this respect when it was built.

Again, meaning may be deduced from the context of the passage but, if verification is sought from learner dictionaries, the following definition will be found in LDOCE:

state of the art adj. Using the most modern and recently developed methods, materials and knowledge: state of the art technology.

The entry conveys a typical range of occurrences and underlines clearly how the item predominates in technological fields. What is not so clear, however, is the emphasis the expression puts on NOW: a state existing at one particular instant and also the markedly positive associations it conveys: that the most modern is synonymous with the best possible. In this sense there is, of course, a marked connection with cultural patterns, especially those where innovation is revered and change positively encouraged. Such a perspective is not a universal one even though it is one which is increasingly spread through international media. To this extent the expression may have also become somewhat cliched and this may explain the use by the writer of our text of distancing or dissociating quotes 'state of the art'. The above dictionary entry does not attempt to gloss such associations but we should also note that neither COBUILD nor OALD has an entry for this phrase.

The third example is taken from a further recent article which appeared in The Guardian newspaper published on 15 December 1988 (see Appendix). The article is headed Hunters under fire from two fronts. The article contains difficulties which occur specifically as a result of metaphoric analogies. Such analogies presume of readers the ability to draw on particular background knowledge into which are encoded culturally-specific social and ideological values.

There is space to focus here on only one illustration of the kinds of lexical difficulties learners encounter with such texts. For example, in the following first sentence the item hunt saboteurs has been highlighted:

> Huntin' shootin' types are under fire from both hunt saboteurs and the European Parliament.

None of the dictionaries explain the compound 'hunt saboteurs' but all three provide entries for each separate element. Included in the various meanings of the noun 'hunt' is the British English sense of chasing wild animals, usually foxes, to catch and kill them using dogs and on horseback. Of course, to identify this meaning as the one appropriate to this article the reader must be able to correctly recognize its particular cultural context.

Interestingly, given the minority nature of this activity, this area of meaning with its associated forms is dealt with in some detail in all three dictionaries. In OALD this extends to explaining the niceties of exchanges with members of the hunting fraternity.

The term 'sabotage' is defined in the three dictionaries with emphasis on the notion of deliberate damage to property, its secret nature and its purpose of hindering opponents. The normal context of use is given as war or industrial or political disputes. In relation to this text these explanations are not entirely helpful. Only COBUILD includes the sense of making a protest as one of the purposes of sabotage and this is the meaning relevant here rather than an engagement in war, industrial or political disputes. Nor are these saboteurs operating in secret. On the contrary, they are eager to publicise their activities.

It might be expected that the activities of these saboteurs, engaged as they are in intentional damage to property would be described in negative terms. But instead, considerable space is given to the airing of their grievances in relation to the violence they suffer in pursuit of their protest. In order to make sense of this apparent contradiction the reader must have sufficient background information relating amongst other things to British attitudes towards wildlife conservation, the operation of pressure groups within society as well as the ideological stance of this particular newspaper.

Our fourth and final example is a verb which occurs relatively frequently in academic discourse particularly in the fields of education and social sciences. In a text drawn from a teacher-training textbook (see Appendix) we have highlighted the verb marginalise in the following sentence:

> ... so is the gauntlet thrown down to schools ... to manage the curriculum plan in ways that cease to marginalise substantial numbers of children ...

None of the dictionaries consulted include an entry of this verb form but COBUILD and LODCE have entries under the adjective 'marginal'. Here the meanings given are: small, unimportant, unproductive (of land) and uncertain/ unsafe (in reference to GB parliamentary seats). The negative connotations of the word can perhaps be derived from the synonyms used for definition. Only COBUILD includes the use of 'marginal' with a human subject to mean 'not involved in the main events or developments' and, under the noun 'margin', a meaning of being furthest from what is typical of a group activity or situation. These are the meanings which appear to be closest to the use and meaning of the verb form in that it operates, with a human subject, as an antonym of 'centralise'. In this sense it links to an underlying culturally-bound notion that what is central is important. The verb form carries a dynamic sense of exclusion and of preventing participation in mainstream activities which have strong negative associations. These might not, however, be apparent from the dictionary or the context. Appropriate interpretation seems to require information related to attitudes which are culture-specific, from a tradition which emphasises, in theory at least, the rights of individuals and minority groups to equal membership of the wider society and which views democratic participation in a positive light.

CONCLUSION

We recognise that we have identified difficulties here which the experienced teacher will have ways of overcoming. We recognise, too, that dictionaries cannot cover everything and therefore have to be selective, that accounts of cultural patterning would often need to be in excess of available space and that, in any selection of items for coverage, it makes pragmatic and pedagogical sense to concentrate on items which are more central to the lexicon of contemporary English and certainly more central to the requirements of the majority of intermediate or upper-intermediate language learners. Above all, we recognise charges of ethnocentricity which can be levelled against us for we may be felt to be assuming that all learners need to be or will want to be intimately acquainted with a culture which may be the site for the target language but not itself the target culture. In fact, in this respect we would concede that instrumental motivation for learning English is many times higher than integrative or even 'participatory' motivation even among those students whom we teach who will be living in Great Britain for the duration of their studies. And we recognise further the relevance of arguments made by Braj Kachru and others for international dictionaries of English to contain either regional supplements or nationally significant lexical items such as kampong in Malay English or been-to in W. African English (items which do not appear in the monocultural dictionaries we have used) (see Kachru, 1983).

Our preparation of this paper has left us impressed by recent advances in pedagogical lexicography in an EFL/ESL context and no direct criticism is intended of those dictionaries we have used where clearly different priorities have been established. We do, however, wish to draw attention to the interface of language and culture in language teaching in general. Careful scrutiny of teaching materials, especially advanced reading textbooks, shows that the materials have been quite systematically selected with most traces of cultural loading in lexis carefully expunged or avoided. But that does not mean the problems are eradicated; only that they are postponed. The current emphasis on extensive naturally occurring data bases in the preparation of learner dictionaries, while to be applauded for many reasons, also means that the problems of lexico-culture associations are not necessarily directly addressed for a linguistic description of the lexicon is not an account of the culture(s) embedded within it. We can only point to the need for further research by applied linguists, lexicographers and language teachers and remark that in the week before finally completing this paper we were forced, without much help from dictionaries, to take on the challenge of explaining gravy train, pressure group, dependency culture and golden handshake to a group of bemused students from four very different cultural backgrounds in Zaire, Korea, Senegal and Pakistan.

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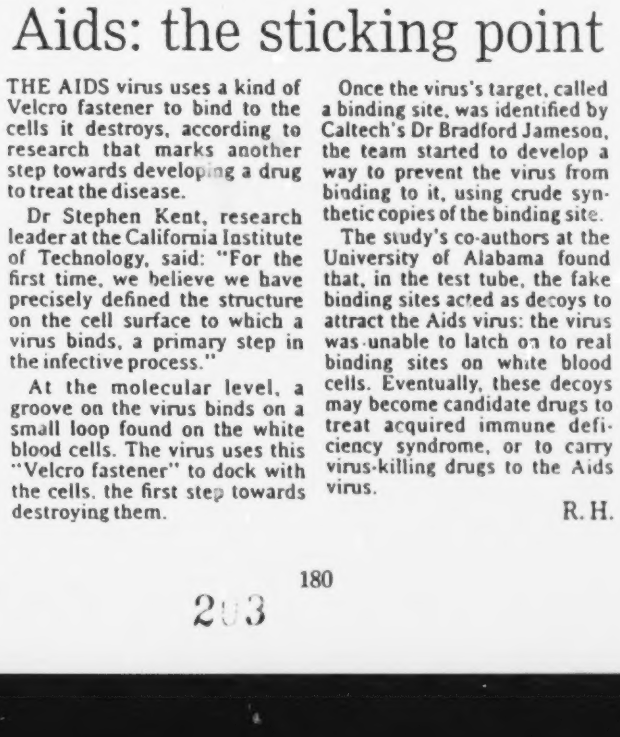
APPENDIX

EXAMPLE 1. From The Guardian 13 December 1988.



Aids: the sticking point

THE AIDS virus uses a kind of Velcro fastener to bind to the cells it destroys, according to research that marks another step towards developing a drug to treat the disease.

Dr Stephen Kent, research leader at the California Institute of Technology, said: "For the first time, we believe we have precisely defined the structure on the cell surface to which a virus binds, a primary step in the infective process."

At the molecular level, a groove on the virus binds on a small loop found on the white blood cells. The virus uses this "Velcro fastener" to dock with the cells, the first step towards destroying them.

Once the virus's target, called a binding site, was identified by Caltech's Dr Bradford Jameson, the team started to develop a way to prevent the virus from binding to it, using crude synthetic copies of the binding site.

The study's co-authors at the University of Alabama found that, in the test tube, the fake binding sites acted as decoys to attract the Aids virus: the virus was unable to latch on to real binding sites on white blood cells. Eventually, these decoys may become candidate drugs to treat acquired immune deficiency syndrome, or to carry virus-killing drugs to the Aids virus.

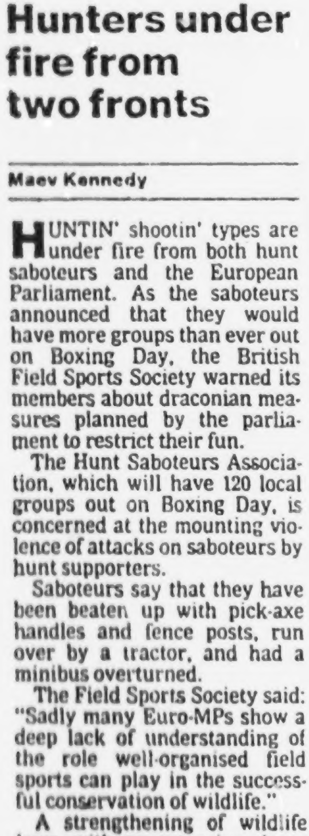
R. H.

EXAMPLE 2. From BACO Scotland - a tale of two smelters by C Taylor in Process Engineering March 1982.

Lochaber's smelter is only one third the size of the Invergordon plant (cap. 37kt/y as against 100kt/y) but both use the same process, passing electricity through imported alumina ore in special 'pots' to turn it into the metal.

This Hall-Heroult process is long-established technology now used almost exclusively throughout the world for aluminium extraction. The trick to beating your competitors is to minimise cost (ie power) requirements per tonne of product. As far as process technology is concerned, that can mean a number of refinements such as designing special buzz bars to minimise dc losses and using modern cells that can take a higher current. Both of these developments have been introduced at Lochaber. Cell technology has advanced considerably in the last ten years: Lochaber's cells are based on Pechiney know-how and will take up to 175,000A dc, compared with Invergordon's 100,000A. Invergordon was considered 'state of the art' in this respect when it was built.

EXAMPLE 3. From The Guardian 15 December 1988.



Hunters under fire from two fronts

Maev Kennedy

HUNTIN' shootin' types are under fire from both hunt saboteurs and the European Parliament. As the saboteurs announced that they would have more groups than ever out on Boxing Day, the British Field Sports Society warned its members about draconian measures planned by the parliament to restrict their fun.

The Hunt Saboteurs Association, which will have 120 local groups out on Boxing Day, is concerned at the mounting violence of attacks on saboteurs by hunt supporters.

Saboteurs say that they have been beaten up with pick-axe handles and fence posts, run over by a tractor, and had a minibus overturned.

The Field Sports Society said: "Sadly many Euro-MPs show a deep lack of understanding of the role well-organised field sports can play in the successful conservation of wildlife."

A strengthening of wildlife laws, with an extensive shooting ban and catch limits for anglers, has been proposed.

EXAMPLE 4. From Teachers and Special Educational Needs by Roy Evans.

The problems associated with matching children with special needs to a pre-set curriculum are of a different order to the problems and issues associated with the evolution of a needs-based curriculum which is responsive to the dynamic changes occurring within the child. It is important that this distinction be made at the outset so that a degree of clarity is achieved in relation to terms like 'individualised' and phrases such as 'supporting the curriculum' and 'meeting the child's special needs'. Superficially, the rhetoric appears to lean to an ideology of child-centredness: to a curriculum that is needs-based and a mode of practice which urges teachers to discover and start from 'where the child is'. Whilst this is not impractical in the pre-school and pre-secondary phases of education (and even here there is far from universal acceptance of the central principles) such a progressivist ideology clashes head-on with the hard reality of the comprehensive school. As successive governments view secondary education with a reconstructivist gleam, predicating the ills of an ailing society on curricular responses which historically and presently appear inadequate to the challenges of post-industrialism, so is the gauntlet thrown down to schools to not only review their curricula, but to manage the curriculum plan in ways that cease to marginalise substantial numbers of children who, in the preceding chapters have been termed children with special educational needs.

PART IV

DICTIONARIES AND USERS

Which Dictionaries and Why?
Exploring Some Options
Makhan L Tickoo

How to Use a Dictionary?
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A Critical Select Bibliography
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WHICH DICTIONARY AND WHY? EXPLORING SOME OPTIONS

Makhan L Tickoo

I INTRODUCTION

This paper has been prompted by the understanding that the advanced language learner often lacks reliable tools to help him choose a suitable dictionary. In the majority of cases he is guided by the teacher's recommendations (Atkins and Knowles, 1988). But very often the teacher, too, remains insufficiently informed about what is available in the market. Latterly, the act of choosing has become more complicated not only because several new dictionaries have entered the market and not just because they are being promoted forcefully but because the best of them, having been influenced by new insights in technology, lexicography and language-teaching pedagogy (not necessarily in that order), have gained new strengths and considerable sophistication. Choosing well now requires a lot more than sound education or long experience. It has to be informed by a full understanding of what today's dictionaries seek to offer and how they do so.

This paper explores parts of what is on offer in today's English dictionaries, relates it to some major developments in dictionary making and to relevant findings of recent research including an on-going study being carried out at RELC (Tickoo: forthcoming).[1] At appropriate places it also refers to those chapters of this anthology which specifically address the questions raised. Since the primary purpose in writing this paper is to help the (English) language teacher's choice of suitable dictionaries for advanced learners, a few of the most widely used English dictionaries have been made use of to illustrate the main points.

I (a) A Buyer's Question:

In the belief that many teachers select no differently from experienced buyers, I began with a question: 'What does such a buyer look for in shopping for a new dictionary?' The following answer seemed not untypical: "To gauge the dictionary's breadth when buying it, I looked up thurible, an Oriental-looking container in which one burns incense, and gorp, a freakishly obese person who eats constantly because he achieves a kind of erotic splendor when sitting on the throne.

The former was listed, the latter not, and because the latter never is listed, because I don't to this day know where I heard the word, and because it didn't seem likely I'd be called upon to use it, I bought the dictionary - anyway, it was cheap." (Kister, 1977).

Two main criteria helped this knowledgeable buyer make his choice - the dictionary's range of inclusiveness and its price. Both are basic. And because for most people a dictionary may be a relatively long-term investment, three other attributes often assume importance - the quality of its paper, its printing and binding.

I (b) Size Versus Scope:

Of the five basics, one appears to require some rethinking. In general a dictionary's size is its main claim to superiority. The Oxford English Dictionary (OED), that monumental work of British lexicographic scholarship, stands towering above all others mainly because it is the most inclusive source of word knowledge. Despite the fact that every dictionary is "self confessedly selective" (Quirk, 1982) and no dictionary contains all or even most English words (Crystal, 1986), OED has within its covers far more word wisdom than one or more semiabridged or abridged dictionaries. For certain purposes therefore (eg an institutional library or for users for whom the biography of words and meanings matters as much as their current use) it has to be an obvious choice.

Dictionaries like OED or, comparable but in some ways different, Webster's Third New International Dictionary, are, however, not the ones that the advanced learner normally relies on. In most cases his choice is restricted to single-volume (collegiate or abridged) dictionaries like the following:

1. Chambers 20th Century Dictionary (CTC): 140,000 entries, 1652 pages
2. The Concise Oxford Dictionary (COD): 75,000 entries, 1368 pages
3. Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English (LDOCE) 55,000 entries, 1303 pages
4. The Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English (ALDCE): 50,000 entries, 1037 pages.

Now, given the fact that he must choose from among such well-known dictionaries as 1-4 above, how should he go about making his choice? The obvious answer here, despite the fact that the word 'entry' signifies somewhat different entities in the case of each dictionary, seems to be the number of entries in each dictionary. A brief look at the four dictionaries will suggest to him that CTC which contains far more entries than those in LDOCE and ALDCE put together should, by virtue of its size, provide the best value for his money. A closer look may bring out another fact however - that the number of pages in each dictionary does not show differences of equal magnitude. A possible inference may therefore be that the latter two dictionaries perhaps offer much more on the far fewer entries in them. But this needs proof which should emerge in the discussion that follows.

A second known measure is a dictionary's preface which once again offers a few facts for a quick comparison. Here, for example, are parts of what he may find in doing so:

(a) The preface to CTC (1976) makes the following claims for the dictionary: It is "a comprehensive vocabulary aid for the present-day reader, speaker and writer of English; it is also "the valued companion of the literary reader and writer ... recording the changes taking place in Contemporary English." Above all, CTC contains "the literary words from the sixteenth century onwards which have for so long made Chambers Twentieth Century Dictionary the chosen companion of the omnivorous general reader as well as the crossword addict's favourite tool."

(b) The preface to ALDCE (1963/1971) provides the following information: "This is not a dictionary of 'Modern English' if this term is used in its usual accepted sense, English since the time of Chaucer. The student of Chaucer will need specially annotated editions. It does not include all the words that occur in Shakespeare's plays ... This is a Dictionary of Current or Contemporary English, the kind of English used in the 20th century by well-educated persons in Great Britain and the U S A".

Put together what a and b show is that the two dictionaries address different kinds of user and differing user needs. CTC claims comprehensiveness, ALDCE plays that down. CTC is built on historical principles and it contains literary words from 16th century onwards, ALDCE is a dictionary of English used in this century. CTC appeals to the omnivorous general reader and the cross-word addict, ALDCE keeps out by deliberate design words that can be called rare, dialectal, literary and archaic.

The last point is brought out far more clearly in a brief comparison that ALDCE's author makes between his dictionary (compiled for the advance learner) and COD which preceded it, and being a product of the same publishing house, viz. Oxford University Press, must have served as a starting point and a model for it: "The first decision, therefore was to omit a large number of purely technical words of the kind that seldom occur outside specialist textbooks and periodicals, and to admit only those technical words that occur commonly in ordinary periodicals. It was decided, next, to omit words now archaic, even though those words were included in the COD. The COD includes numerous words to be found in English literature of the sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries but which are not in current use ... A good deal of what we might call 'dead wood' was cut out, thus providing space for new growths. Some amusing examples of 'dead wood' can be found in the COD. Under 'dine', there is the phrase 'dine with Duke Humphrey', meaning 'go without dinner', and noted as 'perhaps with allusion to those who walked during dinner-time in Duke Humphrey's walk in St Paul's. The wit who, centuries ago, described ante-nuptial sexual intercourse as 'dinner without grace' also has his niche in the COD (under dinner)." (Hornby, 1965)

II. So far we have merely looked at how a selector may seek answers to an experienced buyer's commonsense questions regarding what a particular dictionary includes or, in some cases, excludes. But what does each dictionary do with what it contains? How much and what kind of guidance does it offer and how does it do so? It is questions such as these that need to be answered in making a suitable choice. For our purpose here, which is to relate the discussion to the needs of an advanced learner, it should prove helpful to search for answers in two different ways: first by looking at those common properties that make a dictionary what it is and second by exploring some of those additional features that, at least arguably, enhance the value and usefulness of a dictionary for the advanced learner. The next two sections attempt parts of both, in that order.

II (a) Dictionaries and Definitions:

A basic task in dictionary making is to answer the question 'What does it mean' for each and every word and its forms. Defining has also and for very long been seen as a major challenge to the lexicographer's craft. Few lexicographers succeed in all cases and there can be little doubt that in many cases "undamaged definition is impossible" (Bolinger, 1985). Difficult in most cases, defining becomes much more so where what is being defined is a word in everyday use and where, at the same time, the user cannot be assumed to have a sizeable word-hoard. A majority of foreign learners belong here and defining for them therefore makes special demands on the dictionary maker. Let us look at an example to illustrate this point.

The COD definition of 'cat' as "small domesticated carnivorous quadruped" is a good definition in that it fully satisfies Dr Johnson's ideal of "substitutable definition" and should thus prove useful for some type of dictionary users. For most learners however the words it uses for defining may make it totally unhelpful. ALDCE defines it as "small, domestic fur-covered animal often kept as a pet." Measurably better suited to most learners, this definition can yet be questioned on two counts: that it applies as much to 'dog' as to 'cat' and that the word 'domestic' does not belong to the first 2,000 words of the General Service List of English Words (GSL: West (ed) 1953) which the school-leaver may at best have learnt. A basic essential of a usable learner's dictionary is its ability to define its words in language that is fully comprehensible to its user.

To make definitions easily accessible to learners of English some lexicographers have been making use of small and explicitly listed defining vocabularies. This practice began in the 1930s (West, 1935; Ogden, 1940) and was an important offshoot of many years of work on word frequency and language simplification (Fries and Traver, 1965). Its basic tenet is "that the definition of a term X be formulated only in words of greater frequency than that of X" (Weinrich, 1962). One of the four dictionaries, viz. LDOCE makes use of this principle and defines most (though not all) of its words within a fully specified 2,000 word defining vocabulary whose permitted senses have been clearly spelt out. Here, for example, is how 'cat' is defined in LDOCE's 2,000 words: "A small four-legged animal with soft fur and sharp claws, often kept as a pet or for catching mice and rats." The definition appears to be not just fuller but also, in its vocabulary, better suited to the needs of an ordinary learner.

Definitions in controlled vocabulary ought as a rule to be more comprehensible. A recent study using foreign learners studying at an American university (MacFarquhar, 1985) also showed such definitions to be more accessible and acceptable to their users. It showed that more than half of them (51%) preferred definitions written within a defining vocabulary over those written in 'simple' English (28.5%) and those produced in full English for native speakers (20.0%). Equally important may be the fact that LDOCE continues and in some measure brings to perfection an established tradition in lexicography, viz. that of substitutable definitions. But does this then mean that for the selector such dictionaries are necessarily and in every case preferable to the others? To answer this question the selector must keep in mind the following additional facts:

(i) Not every dictionary maker or lexicologist is convinced about the total superiority of such definitions. Whereas, for instance, for some language scholars the LDOCE's definitions within a restricted vocabulary "had the predictable effect of extracting elemental meaning in the simplest language" (Quirk, 1982), for others such definitions often force in clauses and constructions in place of single words (Crystal, 1986). They may also and often be "longer and harder to cope with than ones using the 'right' but less familiar word" (Whitcut, 1986);

(ii) Control is said to often work at the expense of accuracy; it is seen to often lead to both clumsiness and circumlocution (eg Carter, 1987);

(iii) Several language teaching specialists feel concerned about the fact that such definitions written in restricted codes and at times 'inauthentic' language, may become restrictive if they serve as models for the learner's own use of the language.

(iv) A different and equally attractive alternative has emerged more recently. A total suspicion of the traditional dictionary definitions (whether in full or in restricted language) and of the problems that are caused by their metalanguage

(Quirk, 1974: "An overwhelming majority of university students" who were native speakers of English "apparently experience difficulty in understanding the metalanguage in which definition is expressed") has recently resulted in their replacement by explanation in one dictionary, viz. Collins COBUILD English Language Dictionary (hereafter CELD: for a defence of this view see Sinclair, 1987 a, b). Although it is too early to say whether doing so makes 'definitions' more comprehensible in every case, the first results from a questionnaire-based study conducted at this Centre suggest that at least (graduate) teachers of English in Asia prefer such explanations to definitions in controlled language, although a few also feel somewhat put out by their unavoidable prolixity. What should also make such explanations more acceptable to E(S)FL learners is their style of presentation; definitely less formal, they often come nearest to a conversational style. They read more friendly and should therefore engage the reader's attention somewhat better.

Selectors must, of course, make their own judgments to suit the user and the uses but what should help such a decision is the understanding that in dictionary definitions there is today a continuum - with unsimplified definition at one end and comprehensible whole-sentence explanation at the other. Explanations in particular, although they may go against the dictionary maker's avowed commitment to space-saving, or also against an important attribute of the good definer, ie that he "learns how to lose the least measure of truth with each shortening of a definition" (Landau, 1984), seem to contribute to clarity and ease of access.

II (b) Dictionaries and Illustrative Examples:

To elucidate shades of meaning and the range of usage of a word, lexicographers may use dictionary citations. In English this practice began with Dr Johnson's famous New Universal English Dictionary (1755) and is thus more than 200 years old. The largest number of such illustrative quotations which represent the word's etymology and evolution form part of OED.

Illustrative examples may not form part of many single-volume dictionaries especially if they are meant for the native speaker of the language. Dictionaries like ALDCE and LDOCE (as against CTC or COD) are, however, distinguished by the fact that they make abundant use of illustrative examples. They do so in the understanding that for a foreign language learner such examples can in some measure bridge the gulf between what Widdowson calls 'usage' and 'use' (Widdowson, 1978). A comprehensible definition followed by one or more clear examples of use should obviously help a better grasp of a word's meaning and use than a mere definition. Dictionaries with illustrative examples should therefore make a better claim to the selector's choice than those without them.

A doubt remains, however, viz. 'What makes a good illustrative example?' Answers differ. The late A S Hornby whose learners' dictionary came first and stood unrivalled in this genre for almost three dozen years (1942-1978), had little doubt: "And if we are to illustrate contemporary usage, invented examples may be more helpful than examples quoted from books and periodicals." (Hornby, 1965) In his view such examples which the dictionary maker constructs to suit the learner he has in mind and which constitute the bulk of illustrative sentences in ALDCE, are possessed of strengths that are often absent from citations from literary sources.

Two other views have found expression in recent lexicographic literature. In one there may be little to choose between made-up examples and citations: "It is difficult to think up examples of usage especially under the stress of a deadline and when one has just survived the trauma of actually defining the word. Using citations is not necessarily the answer because writers and journalists like to play around with the language in a way that would sound not quite right from a non-native speaker. Using the unusual is the mark of a skilled and confident writer." (Kirkpatrick, 1985) In the other view which takes support from several years of team research in using computer technology in dictionary design (Sinclair, 1987a/b), there can be little doubt about the superiority of examples from 'real' English when compared with those that the lexicographer makes up to illustrate a meaning. For them it seems unthinkable that anyone can be "rash enough to suggest that it is better to concoct examples" not only because "no one yet knows what breathes life into English which occurs naturally" (Sinclair, ibid) but because it is now possible to select the best from much richer and representative sources of such examples which are being made available in computerised data bases.

The best judgments on what constitutes a better illustrative example will have to come from the classroom. Studies in comparison may suggest, for instance, that in cases like the following (1 and 2 below), made-up examples are capable of providing somewhat greater support to the learner than those taken from English in everyday use. But what should also matter is the user's preferences and in this (See Tickoo: forthcoming) examples from 'real' English found in CELD appear to have an edge over those in ALDCE or LDOCE:

1. On 'regret'
   We heard with regret that you had failed the examination (LDOCE 1978):
   I immediately regretted my decision (CELD):

2. On 'assume'
   He assumes a well-informed manner but in fact knows very little (LDOCE)
   He would assume an expression of saintly resignation (CELD).

All this perhaps makes the selectors' choice much more difficult. His compensation, however, is that there is now a lot to choose from and for learners of English the choice has improved considerably. Illustrative examples that combine the strengths of careful concoction with those of English in 'real' use may have more to offer than those that depend on either. But that and any final judgments on it are tasks for the future.

II (c) Dictionaries and the Grammar of Words:

Even the smallest dictionary may label the word and its different forms as 'noun', 'verb', 'adjective', etc. But is there a significant difference between comparable dictionaries on how much each offers on a word's grammar? The answer is 'yes' since some dictionaries make word grammar a major part of what they provide. To understand some of this let us look at both what is involved and how some of today's dictionaries provide for it.

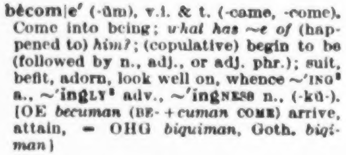
The most seminal idea regarding a dictionary's commitment to word grammar is based on the understanding that a foreign learner's needs are different. It appears to be about 90 years old. "A thoroughly useful dictionary", wrote Henry Sweet in 1899, "ought...to give... information on various grammatical details, which, though they fall under general rules of grammar, are too numerous or too arbitrary and complicated to be treated of in detail in any but a full reference-grammar: such a dictionary ought to give full information about those grammatical constructions which characterize individual words, and cannot be deduced with certainty and ease from a simple grammatical rule." Sweet, who was also perhaps the first linguist to visualize a dictionary "which does not sacrifice everything to giving as large a vocabulary as possible in the shortest space", pleaded in particular for the inclusion of idioms whose meaning "cannot be inferred from the meaning of the words of which the idiom is made up" and also, "prepositions by which verbs are connected with the words they govern (think of, think about, think over, part from, part with)" and "anomalous and irregular forms" (Sweet, 1899).

The first English book to partly answer Henry Sweet's call came out in the 1930s. Entitled A Grammar of English Words (GEW) it combines some of Sweet's ideas on word grammar with its author, late Harold Palmer's insightful understanding that a main roadblock to a foreign learner's efforts at mastering the English language lay in some 1,000 words with more than 5,000 "learning efforts" which stood as "a vast uncharted territory lying between the respective domains of the dictionary maker and the grammarian." (Palmer 1938) Still widely in use in many English language classrooms, this book has a number of features that make it both a dictionary and a grammar.

But although GEW offers a lot on its select 1,000 words, it cannot take the place of a complete dictionary for the advanced learner. For the selector what is important is to find out how much grammar exists in different comparable dictionaries and in what ways each helps (or hinders) the learner's understanding and use of the language.

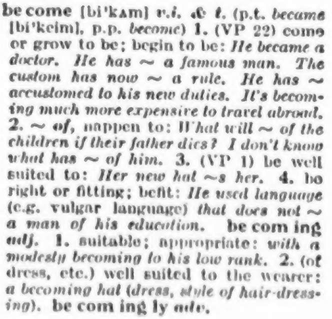
To appreciate some aspects of what is becoming available we shall take a brief look at the word entry on 'become' from two of the four dictionaries - COD and ALDCE - mentioned above.

COD: A



bècom|e′ (-ŭm), v.i. & t. (-came, -come). Come into being; *what has ~e of* (happened to) *him?*; (copulative) begin to be (followed by n., adj., or adj. phr.); suit, befit, adorn, look well on, whence ~′ING^1 a., ~′ingLY^2 adv., ~′ingNESS n., (-kŭ-). [OE *becuman* (BE- + *cuman* COME) arrive, attain, = OHG *biquiman*, Goth. *biqiman*]

ALDCE: B



be come [bi'kʌm] *v.i. & t.* (p.t. *became* [bi'keim], p.p. *become*) **1.** (VP 22) come or grow to be; begin to be: *He became a doctor. He has ~ a famous man. The custom has now ~ a rule. He has ~ accustomed to his new duties. It's becoming much more expensive to travel abroad.* **2.** *~ of,* happen to: *What will ~ of the children if their father dies? I don't know what has ~ of him.* **3.** (VP 1) be well suited to: *Her new hat ~s her.* **4.** be right or fitting; befit: *He used language* (e.g. vulgar language) *that does not ~ a man of his education.* **be com ing** *adj.* **1.** suitable; appropriate: *with a modesty becoming to his low rank.* **2.** (of dress, etc.) well suited to the wearer: *a becoming hat (dress, style of hair-dressing).* **be com ing ly** *adv.*

What are some of the similarities and differences between the two entries? The similarities are partly owed to the fact that both dictionaries are products of the same publishing house: both mark the past and past participial forms of the verb and both signal the fact that 'become' can be used both transitively and intransitively. This important fact may not be specified in every dictionary. Both list the word's inflected forms and offer guidance on the main meanings. Entry A also lists 'becomingness'.

Entry A provides the etymology of the word, including its forms in Old English, High German and Gothic; entry B does not. But, and here begin the main differences, Entry B is larger and much more inclusive. It not only separates the several meanings more neatly and places them in their order of use rather than of historical occurrence, it defines them more fully and in much simpler language. For each meaning it also provides illustrative examples. For meaning 1, for example, there are five illustrative sentences, for meaning 2, two sentences and for 3 and 4 one each. Detailed guidance of the same kind on the meanings and uses of 'becoming' as an adjective is also part of Entry B. Most important for the user perhaps is the guidance provided in Entry B on the differing verb patterns which 'become' belongs to in its two different meanings. In one which is marked VP 22 , 'become' is said to be followed by a predicative in a sentence like 'Her face became red'; in the other marked VP 1 'become' is shown to be followed by a direct object as in 'Such behaviour does not become a person in high office.'

Sizable differences between the two dictionaries also exist in respect of their treatment of other parts of speech (eg common nouns, adjectives, adverbs etc). A few of these can be gleaned, for example, if on the same pages of the two dictionaries which contain the word entries for 'become', we look at the two entries for 'beaver'. The COD entries define the word and its main meanings; they then give its etymology. As well as defining the word meanings in much simpler language and more fully, the ALDCE entries offer help on their use by highlighting the fact that in two of its meanings 'beaver' is used as an uncountable noun like, for example, 'news' or 'love' in most of their meanings.

In what ways does such information help the learner? The short answer is that if there is some truth in the belief that "he (the foreign learner) needs to compose, not to pull to pieces" (Hornby: 1965) such guidance on the word's areas of use should go some way into making this possible. A clearer answer came out however in the work done by two of ELT's greatest pioneers in Japan some sixty years ago. Working with learners of English in that country, Harold Palmer and A S Hornby discovered, for example, that one of the main problems in their use of English was the failure to understand the limits on the uses of many common English verbs. Their work on the verb patterns that followed, led them to two somewhat different answers on how such verbs behave in everyday use.[2] More importantly, it paved the way for the detailed guidance that has since become available on the meanings and uses of English verbs. A most notable aspect of this guidance appears to be the help that some dictionaries, including Hornby's ALDCE, offer towards building learner awareness on where and when to draw the boundaries of a rule on the use of a verb. Guidance of a similar kind, though with less detail, was also made available by these two pioneers on several other parts of speech.

During the last decade lexicographers have made sizeable additions both to what is offered (eg a fuller description of construction and complementation types) and how best it can be done (eg by reducing the size of the dictionary's grammar code, or by making use of a few proven means to make the guidance provided more accessible to the user). Realisation that the learner is often made dependent on a difficult, at times cumbersome, grammar code in order to make good use of what is offered to him, has more recently led to alternative ways of presenting it. LDOCE 1987, for example, makes use of the insights gained in Randolph Quirk's (with others: Quirk, et al. 1985) work on modern English to provide much greater guidance on the grammar of words. It also makes use of a simpler grammar code to make what is provided more accessible. CELD approaches the problems differently. In the research-based understanding that most learners fail to make good use of the grammar codes that are spread out over many pages of a dictionary's introduction, it reduces the need to constantly refer back to grammar codes by making word grammar available as part of each word entry. And to make such guidance more easily accessible to learners with only a limited understanding of English grammar, it also makes use of a relatively more transparent code.

Guidance on word grammar has thus been growing; so have the ways to make it more user-friendly. Once again, however, the problems of choice are made difficult by the (claimed) strengths of each major alternative (See Chapter 8 for a fuller discussion). Many studies including the one being carried out at RELC, also show (a) that learners very often fail to make use of much of this guidance and (b) that a majority of both teachers and learners would prefer guidance which would not force them to depend on opaque codes.

II (d) Dictionaries and Pronunciation:

Every dictionary of the kind we have been looking at here offers some guidance on the pronunciation of words. For the selector, however, what matters is to know how the dictionaries do so. One main difference is in the system of notation used for the purpose. A brief look at the following excerpts from COD and LDOCE should bring out parts of this difference:

COD impŏss'ible LDOCE /im'pɒ sə bəl||im'pɑː /

One obvious difference is that LDOCE makes use of symbols taken from the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) to show the exact pronunciation of a word. This is also true of ALDCE and CELD, although there are slight differences in their use of the system (See Chapter 9 for details). What should also be known to the selector, however, is that in order to make good use of the IPA system the learner must receive specific training in its use. The system of respelling as used in COD may not need similar training but it may also prove to be ineffective as a guide to the correct pronunciation of the word.

A few other things should also interest the selector. One, as can be seen in the two excerpts, LDOCE provides both British (given first) and American (given next) pronunciation. Secondly, it also provides some additional guidance on word accent which, for many learners, often makes the difference between intelligibility and its total loss. Helpful too may be the guidance on 'strong' and 'weak' forms of a number of highly frequent grammar words (eg in LDOCE the pronunciation of have is marked as /v, v, h v; strong h v/ which too characterises everyday English speech. But LDOCE does not necessarily represent all the strengths or limitations of similar dictionaries. In fact even the dictionaries that are avowedly intended for learners, differ in several important ways. Some, for example CELD, show British but not American pronunciation; only a few provide transcriptions of all their entries (here again LDOCE shows much more than CELD). They also differ somewhat on how they show word stress, on how much information they provide on this aspect of pronunciation or, on a broader front, what model of transcription they use. Altogether there is much more and potentially more helpful information in some dictionaries than in others and this too should enter the decision making process.

III. In Section II we looked at those aspects of dictionaries where most of them work towards roughly the same objectives. The differences may be and, as as we saw above, often are major; they are both qualitative and quantitative. The roles are almost identical, however. But there is at least one distinctive area of foreign learner need which, having been studied in different ways in the growing literature on linguistic pedagogy and applied linguistics, has begun to receive specific treatment in some but not all comparable dictionaries. The selector's choice must, it seems to me, take into account both what the student seeks here and how and how well one or another dictionary meets his specific requirements. In this section we shall explore parts of this emerging aspect of lexicography.

III (a) Dictionaries and Appropriate Use:

A major advance in language pedagogy is owed to the relatively recent sociolinguistic understanding that good use is appropriate use (Hymes 1971, Halliday 1975) which is largely determined by the rules of social etiquette. Those born to a language often acquire these rules as part of growing but those who come to it with dissimilar linguistic and socio-cultural backgrounds, must learn them by deliberate effort. What different dictionaries provide in this respect differs as much in quality as in kind and only small parts of what is becoming available is referred to below.

IV (a)i Status labels:

Lexicographers have, over the years, been making use of status labels to provide some help in respect of some words and their special uses. COD, for example, provides what it calls "a cautionary label" (COD 1964) against words that may be colloquial, slang, facetious or vulgar. Against one of the entries for the word 'lout' the reader will, for example, see 'arch' to show that it has become archaic. Some other labels used are 'colloq' as in the case of, for example, 'dotty' or 'padre'; or 'literary' as in the case of 'arride'.

Although meant to serve as rough guides to when(not) to use a particular word, such labels have been found to be largely unreliable. Early in the 1970s Marckwardt found out, for example, that "the criteria for applying these labels are so hazy and inconsistent that uncritical acceptance of the judgment of one dictionary is perilous indeed. "(Marckwardt 1973) With insights gained in English lexicology during the 1980s (Carter 1987), dictionaries like LDOCE and CELD have begun to offer much more to improve the efficacy of such labels as aids to appropriate word use. In its 1987 edition LDOCE, for example, uses many more labels to show "how the use of a particular word or meaning is limited to certain types of speech or writing, or to certain regions of the English-speaking world" in the expectation that doing so "will help you (the user) use the dictionary effectively in order to choose the right word for any situation." In a small measure it also labels words found in the type of English being spoken outside the English-speaking world (eg India and Pakistan). Much of it is equally true of CELD.

There can be little doubt about the potential impact of such guidance on appropriate use. What makes even this relatively richer guidance somewhat undependable, however, is the fact that even today the labels used not only differ from one dictionary to another but also that even identical labels (like formal/informal, technical, derogatory/offensive, slang, humorous etc) appear often to be interpreted somewhat differently across dictionaries. A study of 20 such entries found in LDOCE and CELD (Tickoo 1988) showed, for example, that the two dictionaries often give very dissimilar labels to the same words. All this suggests a degree of basic disagreement if not also inconsistency in use. A major task in lexicography may thus be the search for more dependable, perhaps uniform, guidelines to make the labels fully dependable.

But status/style labels, even fully reliable ones, can become no more than rough guides to appropriate use. Warnings against bad etiquette, they can say little about what precisely each sphere of use demands and what impact related but different words make inside it. A limitation shared by most dictionaries is that because their work "consists in tearing words from their mother context and setting them in rows" (Bolinger, 1985), they do not in most cases show the meanings that words generate within interdependent and interanimating networks. To become useful as a resource for the learner's own use of the language the dictionary must foreground and explicate these networks of relationships and strive to make them accessible to the learner. Only small parts of what may be needed to realize this objective have yet been unearthed, much less having found a place in any dictionary. A brief reference to some additions made recently in a few dictionaries may be of use nevertheless. The following points stand out:

III (b) Pragmatics of Words:

Two of the above dictionaries (LDOCE, 1987 and CELD) argue the need to offer guidance on the pragmatics of words, although they differ somewhat in their interpretation of this term and also in what they offer by way of information and guidance. Pragmatics, says LDOCE, is "the study of the way words and phrases are used in conversation to express meanings, feelings, and ideas which are sometimes different from the actual meaning of the word used"; "it is the way language is used in particular situations", says CELD. Different understandings notwithstanding, both offer some guidance on word pragmatics. It is the what and how of this guidance that should interest the selector. I shall first briefly explain some of what is required and then look at what each offers.

Some of the trickiest words for learners of English are ostensible synonyms like, for example, 'begin', 'start' and 'commence' or, with additional problems, word 'sets' or 'grids' like 'thin', 'lean', 'slim', 'slender', 'wiry' and 'skinny' or similar other sets where meaning differences may be further compounded by attitudes based on history or culture (eg 'whore', 'strumpet', 'prostitute', 'trollop', 'call girl'). In most such cases the learner requires a lot more than precise definition even where it is backed up by illustrative examples; he needs guidance on exact shades of meaning, on the typical uses in 'contexts of situation' (Firth, 1957) and on the subtler style/status restrictions that are associated with each.

Related but much more problematic are some of the most frequent and heavy-duty words (eg 'say', 'ask' and 'tell') or those highly idiom-prone verbs (eg 'come', 'go', 'get', 'give', 'take', 'put', 'do', 'make') which not only belong to the first 200 word-forms of the Birmingham Corpus in order of their frequency (Carter, 1987) but also formed part of the 18 verbs of Ogden's Basic English (Ogden, 1930). In learning each of these words what the learner needs is not only a clear grasp of the range of meanings of the word in its different forms and numerous alignments but, more consequently, the limits to its use in relation to other words and word-forms that share with it (falsely) identical semantic or sociolinguistic territories. It may be words such as these that, at least in part, justify Corder's insightful aphorism that "in language, nothing is learnt completely until everything is learnt." (Corder, 1973)

The two dictionaries differ on both how much and how. LDOCE provides 'usage notes' and makes extensive use of cross referencing to bring out relationships between words that occupy common semantic fields. (See, for example, its entry on the word 'machine' and how it relates it to 'device', 'gadget', 'appliance', 'instrument', 'tool' and 'implement'). LDOCE also provides not only notes on grammar (eg gradable and non-gradable adjectives or articles) but also on a small number of manifestly outstanding areas of sociolinguistic concern (eg politeness, criticism and praise, offers, requests, tentativeness, thanks). It further supplements what is given in its main entries with full-page(s) of 'language notes' which build on typical situations in everyday life to illustrate appropriate use. CELD, which enshrines COBUILD's data-based understanding that "the vast bulk of all text ..., is made up of common words" and sets itself the task of helping the learner "look through the dictionary to the language itself" (Sinclair, 1987b), provides a vast amount of additional information as part of the entries for every such heavy-duty word. On some highly frequent words in particular (eg a few delexicalized verbs like 'do', 'make', 'bring' or 'take') the guidance is both full and highly usable.

In different ways both dictionaries thus appear to be slowly but definitely moving into hitherto uncharted areas of word behaviour. What is also essential for the selector, however, but largely unknown at this stage, is the relative (in)accessibility of the information thus offered. To make good use of LDOCE materials the learner has at times to move from one entry to another and integrate the different bits. This must constitute a somewhat unacceptable challenge for many learners. On the other hand, to take full advantage of CELD as a rich resource on many ordinary English words, learners must, in some cases, plough through entries that are spread out over multiple columns /pages. Once again many learners must find doing so somewhat daunting. Research suggests that the style of presentation may favour CELD (see Tickoo: forthcoming) but good selection must be based on a studied understanding of how much and what use learners make of each type of guidance.

III (c) Word Collocations:

Another intractable area of word behaviour and one that has hitherto received very little attention in most single-volume dictionaries, is of words in the company of other words or what Harold Palmer somewhat facetiously called the 'comings together of words' (Palmer, 1933). "Collocations of a given word", wrote J R Firth "are statements of the habitual or customary places of that word in collocational order." (Firth, 1957) Known for a long time as a major challenge in English lexicology, this myriad mass of material is also a major problem for most E(S)FL teachers and learners.

In the early 1930s a lot of work went into the analysis and classification of word collocations and it resulted in two reports published in Tokyo, Japan (Palmer 1933). Parts of what was discovered then about the company that many common English words habitually keep, found a place in GEW and later also influenced Hornby's work on ALDCE. Both ALDCE and latterly, LDOCE therefore provide some information on many "essential grammatical and et al. recurrent combinations" (Benson et al 1986) that words form in English. In spite of this, however, what is on offer in either dictionary is far away from being full; its organisation also at times suggests a degree of ad hocism.

Two recent exceptions should, however, interest the selector although a final judgment on each must await their use in language classrooms. The first is the information on collocations provided in CELD and the second in a dictionary solely dedicated to word combinations - the BBI Combinatory Dictionary of

English (Benson et al 1986. [Hereafter CDE] Also see Cowie and Mackin: 1975 and Cowie et al.: 1983).

CELD derives its main strengths from the differentness of its database - both its size and its scope. By far the largest such corpus-based study of English words, this longitudinal research made use of not single words but word concordances. John Sinclair, its Chief Editor, provides a brief clue to how doing so contributed to an enriched description of words and word collocations: "The concordances are a huge source of information about a language and from them we compiled a database of linguistic observations, so there is a distinction between the corpus, which is the raw text, and the database, which was painstakingly compiled over many years with between 15 and 20 colleagues going through every aspect of every word; different meanings and uses of words, but not only that, their grammar and semantics; phrases, idioms; levels of formality and fields of reference; and each observation of this kind is accompanied by an example. The whole structure of the database rests upon examples and the dictionary is ultimately little more than a commentary on examples." (Sinclair, 1987a)

Not every dictionary maker may share Sinclair's view on a dictionary being "really just a commentary on the examples", but what should interest the dictionary user and selector is that work on word concordances has greatly added to the known stock of information that CELD provides on words in the company of other words that together form recurrent combinations. A lot of facts about the collocations that common English words enter into, including many which the proficient native speaker uses but is not always conscious of, had hitherto failed to find a place in most single-volume dictionaries. CELD entries make these available for the first time as part of a dictionary.

CDE is a dictionary that attempts a full-scale treatment of word combinations. As such it offers much more than most dictionaries on this subject. But it is also different from the dictionaries we referred to above in that although it defines each combination, it does not provide enough illustrative examples to show appropriate use. To that extent it may lack the strengths of a dictionary suited to learner needs. But apart from providing a neat categorisation of different word combinations, which appears in some ways to build on that of Harold Plamer's work in the 1930s, CDE also pays focussed attention to the differences between American and British usage on word combinations (See Chapter 7 for a detailed defence of CDE).

IV Dictionary Selection and User Preferences:

Judgments on dictionaries are often made using several other criteria. These vary with differing preferences, purposes or, at times, prejudices. For many users, for example, it is dictionary appendices (which range from grammatical to geographical to cultural or to encyclopaedic and vary in what they offer under each), that become a major attraction; for others it is the drawings and pictures that make a big difference. A main strength of some dictionaries including LDOCE may, for example, be the richness and appeal of their illustrations. But dictionary illustrations are not universally accepted as a strength even among those who make dictionaries for foreign learners (eg CELD).

Some other common selectional criteria may be related to widely held notions about the place of different dictionaries at different stages in language learning. A common belief here is that bilingual dictionaries play a useful role in the earliest stages but tend to become a roadblock to a desirable growth into the language being learnt, if relied on after that. (See, however, Chapter 5 for a different view). Another one, backed up by pedagogic prescience, is that since size and scope of dictionaries must vary with language experience, the need to differentiate between dictionaries for learners and dictionaries for native speakers should cease at the higher reaches of language use. More inclusive coverage and, for some purposes, coverage in specialist areas (ESP dictionaries) should instead figure in decision making at that level. Related but different is the preference for one or the other order of arrangement of dictionary entries; for some purposes at some stage the thesaurus style of presentation where themes rather than letters of the alphabet serve as the basis for organisation, is thought to be more useful as an aid to enriching one's stock of words. Most such teacher preferences, however, need support in empirical research.

Good decision making must also go much deeper into each aspect and issue treated above. Judgments on word grammar in different dictionaries, for example, must take into account not just the amount of grammar but also its type and its (ir)relevance to the user; similarly, definitions/explanations must be judged by what they contribute to not only comprehension but production and use. So too is the case with the other major parameters of decision making, including pronunciation, illustrative examples/citations, word pragmatics, collocations and so on.

Two other facts must also play their part. First, the force of habit. Dictionary users get used to special features of one or another dictionary and therefore find it easy to consult it in preference to better and more sophisticated products. This may suggest the need for training and education but it may also suggest the need to respect individual styles of learning. Secondly, research suggests that dictionaries are, in many ways, much the most under-utilized learning resource. This is not true only in the case of ordinary users and their failure or unwillingness to read dictionary prefaces and introductions . It is equally true of even the systems which strive hard to achieve learner self-reliance: in hardly any system has dictionary use yet become an integral part of the growing self-access (multimedia) packages. Understanding the possibilities in the use of dictionaries for 'learning how to learn' should, in time, not only result in better dictionaries but also make LDs part of the core language curriculum.

New dictionaries with their additional strengths and sophistication are thus making the processes of selection a far greater professional challenge. At the same time, however, they have not in any way reduced the need for individual judgement. A good dictionary selector has, above all, to be a critical dictionary browser - a keen observer of its many known features and not a few of its lesser known elements that together set apart one dictionary from another.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. As part of a longitudinal study on the use of dictionaries in this part of the world, I gave 100 graduate teachers of English in India (54) and in this region (46) a questionnaire to get at both their views and practices in the use of dictionaries. The questionnaire also made use of entries from two dictionaries (LDOCE and CELD) to find out how teachers rate their main features.

The study of the results which included Chi-square tests done on the numerical data, showed that a majority of teachers rated CELD entries higher in respect of several essentials, including 'definition'/'explanation', 'style of presentation', 'guidance on usage and grammar', 'example sentences' and 'help towards own use'. A few of them however found the CELD explanations at times unnecessarily verbose. The interim findings are being referred to in a few places in this paper but a detailed review must await further work on the data and will appear in Tickoo 'Dictionaries: Teachers and Learners' (Tentative title: forthcoming).

The study also aims at finding out how and how well or badly learners in this part of the world use their dictionaries and what help they receive for doing so. A beginning was made in this direction too by using a set of tasks with some 60 undergraduate students. The first findings show that the vast majority (about half of them English language students) understood very little of what dictionaries now provide through their codes and therefore made very insufficient use of what the dictionaries have to offer. Although the results are no more than tentative and are clearly subject to correction, there is warrant in them for a lot of additional training of both EFL teachers and students.

2. Work on verb patterns was initiated by Harold Palmer at IRET in /Tokyo, Japan. A. S. Hornby joined him and the two men worked in collaboration for a time. But, as the late Mr Hornby wrote to me in 1968, they "agreed to differ in a friendly way" (Also see Hornby in the Bulletin of the Institute for Research in English Teaching (BIRET) Winter, 1970) and produced two different sets of verb patterns. Palmer used his patterns in GEW and some of his later work; Hornby's verb patterns, of which he was justly proud ("So perhaps I might claim

that when I made my patterns different from Palmer's, I was, to some extent, anticipating the work of the great American linguist, Professor Chomsky" BIRET, ibid), were used in his dictionaries like ALDCE. What is equally important in the context of current EFL lexicography is the fact that this work formed part of a lot of exciting, but largely unrecorded and in parts misunderstood, developments in both pedagogy and lexicology that took place in those days in Japan, India, the USA and UK.

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HOW TO USE A DICTIONARY?

Soekemi

A INTRODUCTION

There are available various kinds of English dictionaries on the market now. They can be classified according to: (1) medium language, (2) level of study, (3) native or non-native user, and (4) discipline of study.

The first English dictionary that foreign students are likely to use is a bilingual one. This kind of dictionary can be either an English-foreign language or a foreign language-English dictionary. Most Indonesian students start learning English when they begin their Junior High School education and they keep learning the language for six years in Secondary schools. During those years of learning English they usually only use bilingual dictionaries.

Another kind of dictionary is monolingual. It is an English-English dictionary. In foreign language teaching a monolingual dictionary has advantages over a bilingual one because when students keep using a monolingual dictionary, they are trained to think in English and prevented from building the habit of mental translation.

Nowadays monolingual dictionaries at different levels are available in many countries. For example: (1) A S Hornby and E C Parnwell, The Progressive English Dictionary. 2nd ed. London: Oxford University Press, 1972. This dictionary has approximately 9600 headwords and can be used for students at the pre-intermediate level. (2) A S Hornby and E C Parnwell, An English - Reader's Dictionary, London: Oxford University Press, 1969. There are approximately 12,700 headwords in this dictionary. It is very helpful for foreign students at the intermediate level. (3) A S Hornby, Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English. 3rd ed. London: Oxford University Press, 1974. It is claimed that there are 50,000 headwords and derivatives in this dictionary. Without a doubt, it is very helpful for foreign students at the advanced level.

Many monolingual dictionaries are written for native English speakers, but some others are specifically prepared for foreign speakers. H W Fowler and F G Fowler, The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Current English. 4th ed. London: Oxford University Press, 1956, and The Funk and Wagnalls Standard College Dictionary. New York: Funk & Wagnalls Publishing Company, 1973, are examples of monolingual dictionaries written for native English speakers. While Michael West, An International Reader's Dictionary. London: Longman, 1965, and John Robert and Janet Shaw, The New Horizon Ladder Dictionary of the English Language. New York: A Signet Book, New American Library, 1970, are examples of monolingual dictionaries for foreign students.

In line with the development of various disciplines, there are today many dictionaries written specifically for people studying those disciplines. In linguistics there is David Crystal, A First Dictionary of Linguistics and Phonetics. Colorado: Westview Press, 1980, and in medicine there is Dorland's Illustrated Medical Dictionary. 25th ed. Philadelphia: W B Saunders, 1974.

B VARIOUS KINDS OF IMPORTANT INFORMATION AVAILABLE IN A STANDARD DICTIONARY

It is obvious that there are many kinds of important information available in a standard dictionary, but many foreign students may not be fully aware of most kinds of information. Therefore it is necessary to point out some of it.

1. Divisions of a Dictionary

A standard dictionary usually consists of three parts: (1) introduction, (2) body, and (3) appendices.

The introduction guides the users on how to use the dictionary effectively. It contains, among others, the information about pronunciation, grammar, style, and idioms. It may also contain some important lists of symbols used in the dictionary.

The body is the main part of the dictionary. It consists of headwords which are arranged in strict alphabetical order. For every headword there is information about: (i) spelling, (ii) syllabication, (iii) pronunciation, (iv) part-of-speech, (v) meaning, (vi) use, and (vii) derivation. Besides this kind of information there are also a lot of illustrations provided in this part.

At the back part of the dictionary there are several appendices containing useful information for its users. The appendices may include: the list of irregular verbs, common abbreviations in English, numerical expressions, weights and measures, punctuation, and affixes.

2. Spelling

The words listed in a dictionary are arranged in alphabetical order and printed in bold type. The words are called headwords, while the information explaining the meaning and use of a headword is called an entry. The first kind of information about a headword is its spelling. Sometimes two or more headwords have the same spelling in English. When this happens, the headwords are numbered, for example lead^1, lead^2, lead^3. The headwords which have the same spelling are either different parts of speech or have different meanings.

3. Syllabication

Every headword is separated into syllables by means of centered dots. Examples:

in.ter.locu.tor [ˌɪntəˈlɔkjutə(r)] n. person taking part in a discussion or dialogue.
reg.is.tra.tion [ˌredʒɜˈtreiʃən] n. recording

In writing foreign students are advised to use this kind of information, so that they can divide words into the right syllables.

4. Pronunciation

It is known that in English one letter may be pronounced in different ways. For example, the letter a is pronounced differently in cat, case, care, cadet, call, and cease. On the other hand, two or more words are spelt differently, but they are pronounced in the same way. For example, hi, high, and hie. In phonetic spelling one symbol always represents only one sound. The pronunciation, which is presented in phonetic transcription, appears immediately after the headword. Examples:

de.ter.mine [diˈtəːmin] v. decide.
kooka.burra [kukəbʌrə] n. large Australian kingfisher.

5. Part-of-Speech Labels

The nine traditional part-of-speech labels are used for identifying headwords. The labels are presented after the pronunciation of headwords. Usually the labels are abbreviated as follows: n. (noun), v. (verb), adj. (adjective), adv. (adverb), conj. (conjunction), art. (article), pron. (pronoun), prep. (preposition), and int. (interjection).

6. Other Labels

Besides the part-of-speech labels, there are usually three other labels used in most dictionaries.

(a) Countable and Uncountable Labels

Countable nouns are labelled by the use of symbol [C] and uncountable nouns are labelled by the use of symbol [U]. Nouns that can be used either as countable or uncountable are labelled by the use of symbol [C,U]. [C] means that the noun has both a singular and a plural form, for example, chair, tree, cow, and apple. [U] means that the noun does not have a plural form for example, information, money and fame. [C,U] means that the noun with a certain meaning has both a singular and a plural form, but with another meaning it does not have a plural form. Examples: coffee, tea, and credit.

(b) Style Labels

Many headwords are also labelled according to their styles. The labels are: formal, colloquial, slang, dated, and archaic. Examples:
corporal (formal) ’of the human body’
customer (colloquial) ’person or fellow’
kid (slang) ’child’
sire (dated) ’father’
cupping (archaic) ’operation of drawing blood through the skin by means of a cup’

(c) Specialist Labels

Many headwords are labelled according to the fields of study in which those words are used. Examples:
morpheme (ling.) ’the smallest meaningful unit of language’
linesman (sports) ’person who helps the umpire by saying whether or where the ball touches or crosses one of the lines’
libido (psychology) ’sexual desire’
wrath (literature) ’great anger’

7. Derivatives

Derivatives are words that are formed by adding suffixes to headwords. A noun plus the suffix -y becomes an adjective, example: rock becomes rocky, grass becomes grassy. A verb plus the suffix -er becomes a noun, examples train becomes trainer, walk becomes walker. An adjective plus the suffix -ness becomes a noun, examples; happy becomes happiness, bright becomes brightness.

8. Two-word Verbs

There are so many two-word verbs in English. Every two-word verb consists of a verbal and an adverbial particle. Examples:

look on 'watch'
take off 'leave the ground'
stand by 'be ready for action'

As indicated in the examples, every two-word verb has a specific meaning. That is why they are very difficult to learn.

9. Other kinds of Idioms

Besides two-word verbs, there are other kinds of idioms in English. Some are listed as the entries of noun headwords. The following examples are listed as the entries of the noun *dirt*:*as cheap as dirt*, *throw dirt at somebody*, and *treat somebody like dirt*. Some others are listed as the entries of adjective headwords. The following idioms are listed as the entries of the adjective word *fair*: *Give somebody a fair hearing*, *fair weather friend*, and *the fair sex*. *Be doing well*, *well off*, and *well away* as the entries of the adverb *well*. *By mistake*, *by chance*, and *by oneself* as the entries of the preposition *by*.

10. Numbers in a Definition

When a headword has more than one definition, these definitions are numbered. They show the different meanings or usages of the headword. For example, the verb *secure* has three meanings: 1 *make fast*, 2 *make certain*, and 3 *succeed in getting (something)*.

Whenever a student comes across the verb *assure* used in a text, he has to choose which meaning is the right one. In this case example phrases and sentences given in his dictionary are very useful for the student to decide the right meaning. Suppose the student is dealing with the following sentence: *You have to secure a loan to buy the house*. He will choose the meaning 3 as the right one, since the sentence closely resembles the example provided in his dictionary: *She has secured a good job*.

11. Verb Patterns

In Hornby's *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English*, all verbs are keyed to numbered verb patterns. This system is very useful for students; it helps them use verbs grammatically. By following the verb patterns, students will say or write *will you do me a favour* instead of saying or writing **Will you do a favour me?*

12. Etymologies

In many dictionaries etymologies printed in square brackets appear after the definitions. Examples:

catamaran [kə'tæmərən] raft of two boats fastened side by side' f. Tamil katta-maram tied tree
Gambit ['gæmbit] kinds of opening in chess in which a player sacrifices a pawn to secure certain ends f. Italian gumbetto tripping up

C HOW TO USE A DICTIONARY?

Some dictionaries are especially prepared for giving a learner very practical help in developing the three language skills: speaking, reading, and writing. In order to get the best help from such a dictionary, however, not only does the learner have to master the rules of English grammar and pronunciation but he has to acquire a vocabulary that enables him to read and understand English at the pre-intermediate level.

1. How to use a Dictionary in Teaching Speaking?

In reality, it is not enough for a teacher of foreign languages just to explain the information about pronunciation available in a dictionary. What is much more important than that is to teach how to use the information.

In this case the teacher may begin with giving some words as examples. He writes the words on the board and pronounces them carefully. When his students are able to pronounce those words correctly, the teacher writes the phonetic transcription next to each word. He trains his students to read the phonetic transcription, then he erases the words written in orthographic transcription and asks them to read the phonetic one.

In the exercise that follows he writes some words on the board and asks his students to pronounce them with the help of their dictionaries. This kind of exercise must be repeated several times, until the teacher is sure that his students are able to read the phonetic transcription in their dictionaries.

The next step is to train the students to write the phonetic transcription of some selected words. It must be remembered that the materials for this exercise should include stress patterns, derivatives, and foreign words.

2. How to use a Dictionary in Teaching Reading?

In second or foreign language teaching, there are two kinds of reading activity: intensive and extensive reading. These two reading activities are different in several ways and each requires a different type of help from the dictionary.

In intensive reading, students' reading activities are mostly done in the class-room under the direct guidance of their teacher. The reading materials are relatively limited, but they are studied thoroughly by the students.

First, the students are assigned to find out the meanings of unfamiliar words or phrases printed in a text through their contexts. If they cannot find them, they must use their dictionaries. Since their time is limited, they must learn how to use their dictionaries effectively. Before choosing the right meanings of the new words, the students have to transcribe phonetically the pronunciations of those words.

The next exercise is to build up the students' vocabulary. In this exercise the students have to identify the parts of speech of the new words and then by using their dictionaries, they have to form various derivatives of those words. For example, the students start with identifying the part of speech of the word *design*, then they have to find its derivatives (designer, designing, designate, designation) as well as their meanings.

The third exercise is to assign the students to study two-word verbs found in their text. The students begin with identifying any two-word verbs printed in their text and finding their meanings in their dictionaries. This exercise is extended by assigning the students to find other two-word verbs related to the two-word verbs found in their text. Suppose, in the text the students read the following sentence: *This rare book is hard to come by*. Now they are assigned to use their dictionaries for the meaning of *come about*, *come across*, *come after (somebody)*, *come apart*, *come round*, etc.

Another exercise is to assign the students to learn other idiomatic expressions. Besides identifying two-word verbs, the students are assigned to find other kinds of idiomatic expression in their text. Suppose, they have come across the following expression: *As the population grew*, *the food production did not keep pace*. Here they are assigned to study other idiomatic expressions using the word *pace*.

In extensive reading, students are expected to read a great deal of reading materials outside the class-room. They are not under the direct guidance of their teacher; consequently their reading activities depend greatly on their motivation.

In extensive reading the students are advised to mark all new words and phrases found in their texts by using a pencil in their first attempt at reading those texts. Before their second attempt they have to look up those words and phrases in their dictionaries.

3. How to use a Dictionary in Teaching Writing?

A dictionary can also be useful in many ways in teaching or learning writing. The most common way of using a dictionary in writing is for checking the spellings of difficult words used by the students in their compositions. Besides the spelling problem, very often the students may also not know how to divide certain words into syllables correctly. By using their dictionaries they can solve this kind of problem quite easily.

Another useful way of using a dictionary in writing is for checking how to use certain nouns grammatically. In writing a composition, it frequently happens that the students do not know whether certain nouns are countable or uncountable and they may write the following sentences: *Give him a good advice! and *There are many news in this paper. Such a kind of mistake will never happen, if the students use their dictionaries properly.

To use verbs grammatically in a composition is a common problem for many students. To overcome this problem it is necessary for the students to develop the habit of consulting their dictionaries in using verbs. Examples as well as verb patterns provided in a dictionary are very helpful for the student in using the verbs grammatically.

Word choice is another problem in writing. Very often students do not know whether the words they have chosen in their composition are really the right ones. In this case they can consult their dictionaries for appropriate words and the teacher has to encourage them to do so systematically.

Sometimes it is necessary for students to use idiomatic expressions in their writing. Since idiomatic expressions have fixed forms and specific meanings, the students are advised to consult their dictionaries when they have to use them.

Probably the most difficult problem in writing for foreign students is related to registers or styles. In this case style-labels provided in a dictionary are very helpful for the students. Therefore the teacher should not fail in training his students to get the benefit from this kind of information.

D CONCLUSION

In relation to the use of a dictionary in foreign language learning, there are three goals that the students have to achieve: (1) the ability to choose a suitable dictionary, (2) getting the various kinds of information available in a dictionary, and (3) becoming skillful dictionary users. This article has answered some problems that arise in 2 and 3 above.

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WHAT WE (DON'T) KNOW ABOUT THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNER AS A DICTIONARY USER: A CRITICAL SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY

R R K Hartmann

1 INTRODUCTION: ASPECTS OF DICTIONARY USE

There are many gaps in our knowledge about the practice and theory of lexicography. The country-by-country documentation of dictionary projects is still woefully inadequate; public awareness of the merits and demerits of dictionaries is much too limited; training facilities for academic lexicographers are practically nonexistent; the standards of commercial dictionary publishing are often regrettably low. Fortunately, the last few years have witnessed a spectacularly fast growth of resources, meetings and publications in the field of lexicography (1), which is likely to improve the situation dramatically within even our own generation.

One of the most promising - even fashionable - recent developments has been the so-called learner's dictionary which has exercised the attention of both lexicographers and language teachers. It is often, but not always, tied to the 'user perspective' in lexicography, an interest that can probably be traced back at least 30 years to Clarence Barnhart's famous dictum that "... it is the function of the popular dictionary to answer the questions that the user of the dictionary asks, and dictionaries on the commercial market will be successful in proportion to the extent to which they answer these questions of the buyer". (2) I have argued in a number of papers (3) that the best way to pursue research into dictionary use is in terms of four parameters: 'dictionary typology' (the information categories contained in the dictionary), 'user profiles' (what kinds of people consult dictionaries), 'needs analysis' (the kinds of activities that require dictionary consultation), and 'skills protocols' (the strategies necessary for successful reference acts).

In the bibliographical section of my paper I have selected ten items from the literature on the language learner as dictionary user in order to demonstrate not only that research in this area has turned up some useful facts, but also that much needs to be done to perfect our knowledge about these processes. I have made my selection with the following criteria in mind: (a) recent studies of (b) practical aspects of (c) general dictionary use by (d) EFL learners. Thus, contemporary publications have been given preference - none are more than 10 years old - notwithstanding early work by such pioneers as Barnhart in North America and Hornby in Britain. Consideration of practical issues outweighs theoretical problems, particularly as theory is in any case still in its infancy. The emphasis is on the all-purpose, general dictionary, as very little research has been done on the use of specialised or segmental dictionaries (which in itself constitutes a serious knowledge gap). Finally, in line with the focus of this volume, the target user group is the foreign learner of English rather than the native speaker, the advanced adolescent student rather than the child beginner, the monolingual dictionary rather than the bilingual, the wider international context rather than the more localised condition. As truly comparative studies have not yet been carried out at a significant level (4), generalisations should not be attempted without extreme caution. (Nevertheless, I venture to draw a few conclusions in Section 3.)

The arrangement of the bibliographical items in Section 2 is in alphabetical order of authors/editors. Each item is characterised in terms of the following features: type and background of author and publication, approach taken and main results, questions raised but left open.

2 BIBLIOGRAPHY

ATKINS, Beryl T and Knowles, Francis E:
"Interim report on the EURALEX/AILA research project into dictionary use"

in BudaLEX '88. Proceedings from the 3rd EURALEX Congress ed. by Tamas MAGAY & Judit Zigany. Budapest: Akademiai Kiado forthcoming.

This study is remarkable in a number of respects. The main researchers (Sue Atkins, Helene Lewis, Della Summers and Janet Whitcut) are well-known practising lexicographers associated with three different dictionary publishers in Britain who started (in 1984) with the conviction that in "an area where little is known and much may be improved", empirical surveys were needed to assess how well students use their dictionaries. With the moral (if not financial) support of both EURALEX and AILA and through a network of 9 agents and over 90 individual and institutional helpers they managed to observe some 1,100 EFL learners from 4 language groups (Spanish, Italian, French and German, in this numerical order) in 7 countries, using a combination of three research methods, a questionnaire (for a profile of user attitudes), a placement test (for establishing proficiency levels), and a set of 44 practical exercises (to test reference skills).

723 complete responses were available for detailed correlational analysis. It was found that over 60% of the respondents had not received any tuition in dictionary using skills, although nearly 50% owned at least one dictionary. More use bilingual dictionaries than monolingual ones, and most can handle basic grammatical information. However, there are disturbing discrepancies between user practices (eg in the way they look up multiword units under different constituents) and dictionary conventions. Some more statistical work is planned, and it may be possible to carry out specific calculations on-line using the EURALEX database (c/o Frank Knowles, University of Aston, Birmingham). A set of tests can be received, especially by those who may be willing to undertake more work with existing tools in their own institutions, from Sue Atkins (Dictionary Research Project) as 11 South Street, Lewes, Sussex, BN7 2BT, England.

BAXTER, James:
"The dictionary and vocabulary behavior: a single word or a handful?"
TESOL Quarterly 14, 3 (1980) 325-336

More limited in scope and methodology is Baxter's survey of Japanese students of English published in a periodical which has done much in the last few years to encourage discussion of aspects of dictionary use. The 'handful' in the title introduces the argument that words should be learned in context by reference to each other rather than in restricted relation to single-item equivalents found in the bilingual dictionary. More encouragement should be given to the use of monolingual target-language (English only) dictionaries because they relate words to other words by means of definitions and examples, while bilingual dictionaries tend to cause interference errors by perpetuating the learner's reliance on literal translation.

Baxter supports his argument by questionnaire data on dictionary acquisition and frequency of use. Apparently, college and university students are much more likely to own and consult bilingual rather than monolingual dictionaries, a finding that has since been confirmed by research in many other parts of the world.

However, before we allow the notion of 'weaning away' the learner from the translation dictionary to the monolingual dictionary to fossilise into established dogma, we should carefully examine for each language pair in question the availability of monolingual dictionaries and the psychological reality of the translation process. Baxter deserves credit for having made us aware of a few of these questions, even though his answers may be based on irrelevant evidence.

BENSOUSSAN, Marsha; SIM, Donald; WEISS, Razelle:
"The effect of dictionary usage on EFL test performance compared with

student and teacher attitudes and expectations"
Reading in a Foreign Language 2, 2 (1984) 262-276

Language testing is another area where objective knowledge is harder to come by than subjective opinion. So we must applaud the efforts of these three Israeli scholars to throw light on a very vexed problem indeed: the status of the dictionary in examination settings. Bensoussan et al. set out to determine what effect the use of dictionaries has on reading comprehension among university students of English as a foreign language. They tested over 700 students at two institutions in two consecutive years and came to the surprising conclusion that the use of monolingual or bilingual dictionaries does not affect performance in reading comprehension tasks as measured by multiple-choice questions on each of three texts used.

In spite of the impressively large sample, these results must be considered inconclusive, however, since there are doubts on whether all the interacting variables have been properly controlled. Thus, a preference was expressed by the subjects for bilingual dictionaries, but monolingual English dictionaries (for which testees may have been inadequately trained) were given equal status. The subjects were advanced learners, (some of whom did well on the test without reference to any dictionary), yet the level of the task and its mode of assessment may have been inappropriate or too artificial. There could even be external independent factors at work, such as wide discrepancies in language proficiency of the candidates or the traditional aversion of syllabus planners to reference books in examinations.

COWIE, Anthony P, ed.:
The Dictionary and the Language Learner. Papers from the EURALEX Seminar at the University of Leeds, 1-3 April 1985 (Lexicographica Series Maior 17)

Tübingen: M Niemeyer 1987

Among conference proceedings, this volume has already established itself as a modern classic. The editor is well known for his work in EFL and lexicography and for his 'bridge-building' between theory and practice. Many of the current issues of the (English) learner's dictionary are treated here, by the leading experts, welded together by Tony Cowie into a valuable resource book.
Most of the 18 papers are relevant to the concerns of the present collection, but the following five may be singled out for attention here: a critical review (by R R K Hartmann) of research into dictionary use, a field which is described as "alive and well, but in need of a 'quantum leap' into the realm of scientific respectability"; a computer-aided analysis (by J Jansen et al.) of the 'controlled' defining vocabulary of one particular learners' dictionary, suggesting a number

of improvements to dictionary presentation and computer-aided language learning; a two-part discussion (by R Béjoint and A Moulin) of the need for workbooks to help teachers and learners to get the most out of dictionaries, especially in exercises for encoding; a convincing plea (by T Herbst and G Stein) for integrating into language teaching syllabuses a specific component concerned with developing 'dictionary-using skills'; and a classification of learners' errors (by S Maingay and M Rundell) intended as a warning to writers of dictionary entries that even the most carefully worded definition or example can still constitute a 'trap' for the foreign learner.

Much of the material presented in the Leeds Seminar papers is raw and programmatic, and many aspects of the subject are ignored altogether, but there is ample food for thought as well as an excellent consolidated bibliography, with separate lists of 47 cited dictionaries and 182 other references to the literature of what has come to be called 'pedagogical lexicography'.

ILSON, Robert F, ed.:
Dictionaries, Lexicography and Language Learning (English Language Teaching Documents 120) Oxford: Pergamon Press 1985

This set of 14 papers specially commissioned for the British Council ELT series was the first stab at a conspectus of the main problems common to dictionary making and language teaching. Credit for the effort goes to Robert Ilson, the tireless American lexicographer/linguist/teacher/editor in London who has done so much to publicise and professionalise the tasks of the dictionary compiler.

The volume contains, inter alia, Betty Kirkpatrick on some basis distinctions between dictionaries for native speakers and dictionaries for foreign learners, J C Wells on how to represent pronunciation in dictionaries, John Sinclair on lexicographic evidence, and Adrian Underhill on the use of dictionaries as aids to learning.

Most of the contributions are short and to the point, perhaps a little too short to allow a fair reflection of all the sides of an argument , but this was meant to be a discussion document, not a research report or encyclopedia. It deserves the wide dissemination it has enjoyed.

LEMMENS, Marcel and Wekker, Herman:
Grammar in English Learners' Dictionaries
(Lexicographica Series Maior 16)
Tubingen: M Niemeyer 1986

Grammar is a topic that is never far away when the dictionary is the object of our interest. We are intrigued by the paradoxical tension between the great abundance of grammatical information offered in dictionaries and the rank reluctance on the part of the learner to make use of it. This dilemma of the pedagogical lexicographer is examined here by two Dutch EFL linguists with the intention of improving the existing coding systems for the benefit of students of English.

The coding conventions of five English learners' dictionaries (Oxford's ALD, DCIE 1 and DCIE 2 and Longman's DCE and DPV) are critically compared in the light of recent work in 'mainstream' syntax (mainly Quirk's Grammar), inadequacies pointed out, and more user-friendly alternative systems put forward which attempt to combine maximum coding explicitness (eg 9 verb classes) with the desideratum that each coded structure should be exemplified at least once in the respective entries.

Lemmens and Wekker readily admit that their "alternative is far from complete" and "contains a few points that we are not happy about", but the book is the first systematic analysis of its kind and should be taken seriously by dictionary editors and publishers.

SCHOLFIELD, Philip J:
"Using the English dictionary for comprehension"
TESOL Quarterly 16 (1982) 185-194

This is a case study of (British) applied linguistics at its best: breaking down the complex skill of consulting a dictionary into seven constituent steps and relating them to the reading comprehension process. The result is an algorithm for teaching dictionary reference skills to learners who need help with decoding.

Phil Scholfield's solution to the problem is not the only, or even best, for a particular learner or context, but it can be used as a model for developing instructional materials for the encouragement of good dictionary habits. (Relative mastery of look-up strategies may also be a third decisive factor on the puzzling results reported by Bensoussan et al above.)

STREVENS, Peter:
"The effectiveness of learner's dictionaries" in Studies in Lexicography ed. by Robert W Burchfield Oxford: Clarendon Press 1987, pp. 76-93.

This paper is one of several commissioned by the famous editor of the four OED supplements to celebrate the progress of academic lexicography. Peter Strevens is well-placed, at the end of his distinguished career in EFL and applied linguistics and as editor (in 1978) of the festschrift In Honour of A S Hornby, to ask the question "Are LDs effective, then?

His answer ("Apparently so") is based on an evaluation of the two principal prototypes, Oxford's ALD (Hornby/Cowie) and Longman's DCE

(Procter/Summers), their development and features, especially grammatical codings (cf. Lemmens and Wekker above), but with the proviso that teachers have an important part to play in optimising dictionary use. This is a pedagogically significant realisation; unfortunately, however, Strevens does not give any clues on how such instruction should be carried out.

TOMASZCZYK, Jerzy:
"Dictionaries: users and uses" Glottodidactica (Poznan) 12 (1979) 103-120

Prompted by a wave of criticism of existing dictionaries and the first examples or user studies (eg by Barnhart and Quirk), this Polish applied linguist undertook one of the most comprehensive questionnaire surveys ever tried to find out which dictionaries meet (or fail to meet) the expectations of their users.
Tomaszczyk's subjects included 284 foreign language learners and 165 language teachers and translators; the 16 languages reported on included English, Russian, Polish, French and German; the 8 portions of his questionnaire elicited data on language activity contexts, type and assessment of dictionaries used, reference frequency of different information categories, and comments on shortcomings. The most important finding was that dictionary use depends on the nature and extent of the skill practised and on the proficiency level of the user, with writing and reading coming top, translating in the middle, and speaking and listening at the bottom. Bilingual dictionaries are apparently consulted more than monolingual ones, especially for encoding tasks, although users more often criticised the former rather than the latter. Respondents also suggested that there should be more proper names and pictorial illustrations, and that a wider range of dictionaries for restricted purposes "would be a better solution than the increasingly bulkier general dictionaries".
Tomaszczyk's presentation of numerical evidence is not always clear, the statistical analysis is incomplete, and the questionnaire is not reproduced. In the last ten years we have also learned that indirect surveying of population samples ought to be supplemented by more controlled direct observation and experimentation.

TONO, Yukio:
On the Dictionary User's Reference Skills
Tokyo: Gakugei University B Ed. dissertation 1984

The first genuinely experimental study of the dictionary behaviour of EFL learners is based on the hypothesis that students do not make full use of the information contained within the intricate structure of dictionary entries. To test this, Tono developed an ingenious research method, ie inserting into texts used for a translation task a number of nonsense words for which he then compiled special English-Japanese dictionaries.

By careful manipulation of 4 such texts and 2 such mini-dictionaries with 2 groups of randomly selected subjects a high degree of statistical reliability was achieved, making the results all the more remarkable: Users tend to concentrate their look-up act on the beginning of entries, ignoring later sub-senses. Too many examples supporting the definitions of the various senses of an entry word can also discourage the user from going through the whole entry. The obvious implication is that more deliberate instruction in the relevant reference skills is required. Lexicographers could also help by redesigning dictionary entries so that a list of equivalents precedes all other information.

Some questions remain open, eg on the factor of proficiency levels and test conditions, but at least the case has been made for replicable techniques. Let us hope that future research will take notice.

3 CONCLUSIONS

Even this very brief survey based on my admittedly limited experience allows a few tentative generalisations:

(1) We know that the history of learners' dictionaries goes back at least 40 years, but perhaps it is time to try out designs other than those that have come down to us from the likes of Barnhart and Hornby.

(2) Much is known about the tradition and features of the English learners' dictionary, but it may be helpful to compare parallel developments elsewhere, eg for French and Russian.

(3) We know that learners' dictionaries are different from dictionaries for the native speaker (whoever he/she may be), but I suspect that they are not (yet) different enough.

(4) There is no doubt that the bilingual dictionary is in competition with the monolingual dictionary, yet there is no firm evidence for deciding at what point the learner should forsake one for the other.

(5) It is taken for granted that learners' dictionaries are useful for all sorts of tasks (encoding, decoding, vocabulary acquisition), but there is no agreement on the relative priorities.

(6) We recognise that the learners' dictionary is packed with potentially useful information, but we are not sure how much of this is essential or redundant.

(7) We know that the structure of the dictionary entry is dense and complex, but we have not succeeded yet in improving its textual transparency.

(8) There is some consensus about the need to build the dictionary into examination syllabuses, but no obvious way to do this has been found.

(9) We are aware that dictionary reference skills are extremely important, but we are not certain how we should teach them.

(10) We know, finally, that there are many other topics which are still waiting to be systematically explored (encyclopedic and cultural information, technical vocabulary, pictorial illustration, computer presentation), but we can only hope ...

The overall conclusion I draw from all this is that the field of 'pedagogical lexicography' must be developed forcefully in open interaction between language teachers and dictionary makers. However, such developments will not succeed unless they are accompanied by higher standards of professional training and academic research.

NOTES

(1) Just one example: the new International Journal of Lexicography, sponsored by both EURALEX and DSNA and edited by Robert Ilson, contains in its fourth issue an article by Richard Hudson (1988: 287-312 "The linguistic foundations for lexical research and dictionary design") in which three conventional assumptions in linguistic theory and lexicographical practice are challenged: the lexicon is not a distinct component of lexico-grammar; the lexicon is not a list of discrete lexical entries; the lexicon does not contain only intra-linguistic information.

(2) On p. 161 of the Bloomington 1960 conference proceedings Problems in Lexicography, ed. by F W Householder and S Saporta (Indiana U P 1982).

(3) E.g. in my contribution (Article 12 "Sociology of the dictionary user: Hypotheses and empirical studies") to the international encyclopedia of lexicography Wörtherbucher/Dictionaries/Dictionnaires, ed. by F J Hausmann et al. and published by W de Gruyter, Berlin (Vol. 1 in press).

(4) For the first instance of a truly international bibliography, cf. Ladislav Zgusta's Lexicography Today (Lexicographica Series Maior 18), Tübingen: M Niemeyer 1988.

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